Do the Two Major Parties Matter?

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DECEMBER1999
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THE EMERGING FACE OF CALIFORNIA POLITICS

Voters are demanding more than politics-as-usual

Gen X can play a role

WILL THEY?

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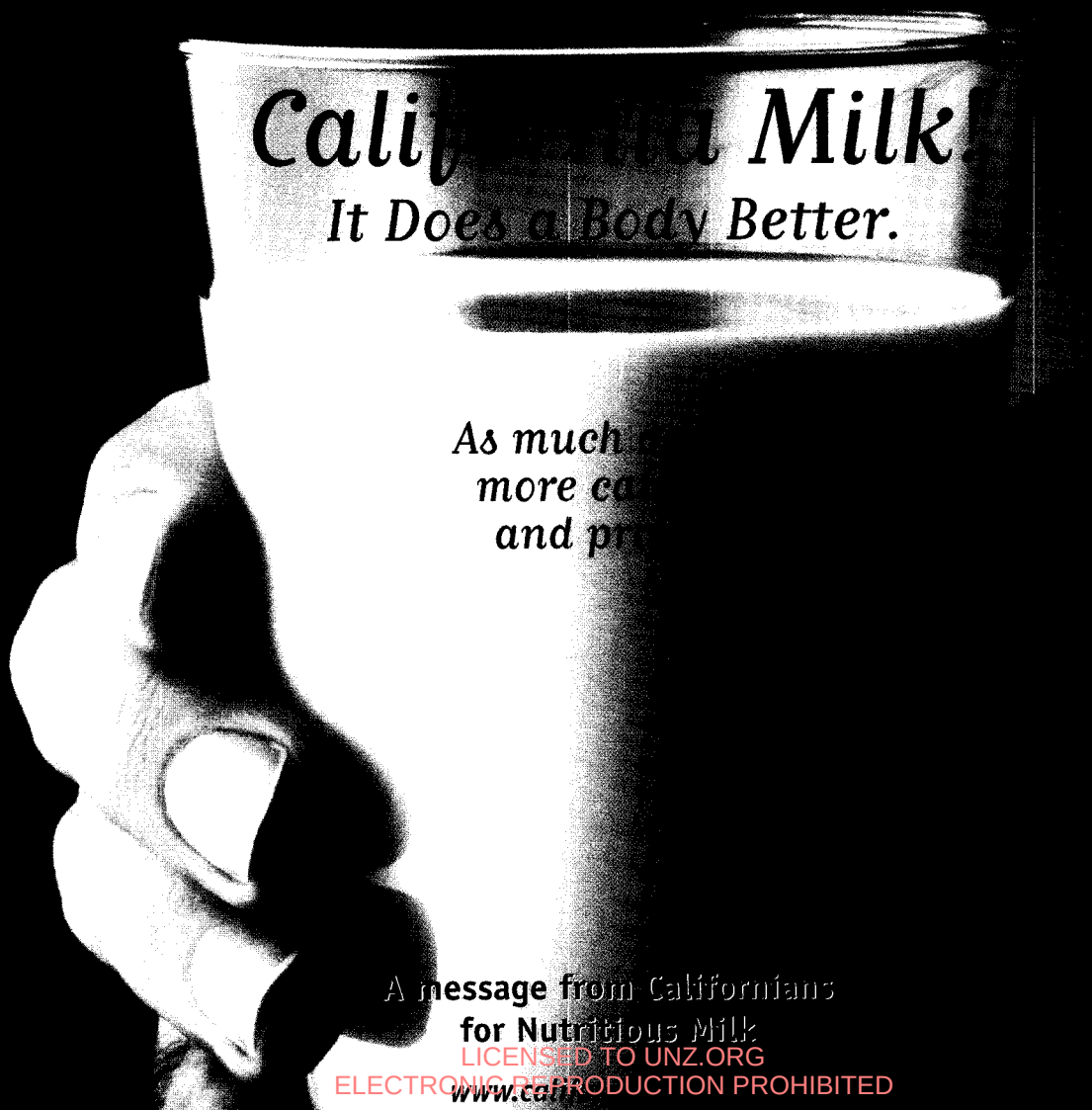
Calcium Reduced Milk?

Leading health organizations like the California Dietetic Association and the Foundation for Osteoporosis Research and Education recognize that few children and teens are receiving proper calcium nutrition today. That's why food manufacturers are scrambling to fortify cereals, juices and other products with this essential nutrient. It seems ridiculous to consider removing much needed calcium from milk, our primary source. But that's exactly what Arizona dairy interests are trying to do in our state. They want to slash our milk quality and nutrition standards to meet their business needs.

For the past 37 years, Californians have benefited from drinking the highest quality, most nutritious milk in the nation—milk that offers as much as 33% more calcium than milk sold in other states. Moms and Dads who grew up with our higher standard milk now see the benefits for their kids. And they expect our state to continue as a leader in good nutrition and health. California's milk standards made sense in 1962 and make even more sense today.



A message from Californians
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December 1999
Volume XXX, Number 12

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Rostrum

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Meet DeeAnn

Sometimes you need look no further than your own backyard to find what you've been searching for. Dorothy learned this the hard way — concussion and all. As for us, we were fortunate enough to find what we sought — a cover model — right beneath our very noses. While pondering what to do for this month's cover, we looked up from our work stations and spotted DeeAnn Little, one of our resident Gen-Xers.

A technical services manager and computer programmer, DeeAnn-The-Trouble-Shooter plays a critical role in keeping our midtown Sacramento offices humming. And while she agreed to a cameo on our Generation X cover, she made one thing clear: "I'm not the spokesmodel for an entire generation."

Here's what she believes in: Self-sufficiency, taking responsibility for herself, feathering her own nest (read: doubts about Social Security). She is 30, married, has voted since coming of age and has swapped political parties more than once. Politicians may disregard her voice, but DeeAnn keeps a keen eye on candidates and their stands on issues. She believes pundits characterize her generation as more shallow than it is. "We don't have as short an attention span as perceived," she says. Meet DeeAnn. She's not to be taken for granted.

/ Cynthia H. Craft

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A growing number of California voters are looking beyond the two-party system for fresh ideas and inspiration. One thing is certain: Democrats and Republicans don't seem to be filling the bill.

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Leo McCarthy has been a longtime assemblyman, lieutenant governor and appointee to a national blue-ribbon panel on gambling. Now he's warning Californians about the hazards of widespread casino expansion.

By Claudia Buck

Design by Dagmar Thompson
Photo of DeeAnn Little

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Southern hospitality. It wasn't exactly blackjacks and fire hoses, but North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms proved that there's still a little bit of the "Old South" left in the United States Senate. After trying for months to get an audience with Helms to push for a U.N. Convention banning discrimination against women, Marin Representative Lynn Woolsey showed up with eight of her Democratic House colleagues at a hearing being held by the conservative lawmaker, who chairs the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee. The lawmakers, along with about a dozen other people, held up blowups of a letter signed by about 100 House members urging Helms to hold hearings on the issue. When they showed up, Helms accused them of disrupting his hearing: "You, please be a lady," he told Woolsey, as recounted by the *Washington Post*. "You are not going to be heard." When the lawmakers decided not to leave, the ever-collegial and chivalrous Helms called the Capitol Police to escort Woolsey and her colleagues out of the room. While press reports didn't record exactly what was said as the "ladies" left the room, it's a cinch one phrase that didn't pass between them was the traditional Southern farewell, "Y'all come back now, hear?"

Justifiable fratricide. Well, it appears all is well after a nasty spat between Representative Bill Thomas (R-Bakersfield) and Republican National Committee chair Jim Nicholson. The set-to began in a House GOP Conference meeting, at which Thomas lashed out at Nicholson over the latter's rather tepid backing for Proposition 24, the GOP-concocted redistricting initiative set for the March ballot. After the meeting, the two exchanged pungent letters, with Thomas caustically accusing Nicholson of trying to "cover [his] ass." One week later, though Nicholson had tendered his official endorsement, and the two hugged each other in full view of the rest of the House GOP conference (who says Republicans can't be touchy-feely?). Now, Bill Thomas will never win any popularity contests, especially in Sacramento, where Republicans are still seething over his decision to use a legislative pay cut as the initiative's voter bait. But his little outburst wasn't entirely unjustified. It seems, at the first meeting, Nicholson had been hounding House members to support the party's bid to flip the Virginia House of Delegates, going on about how vital that state's reapportionment was. Hello? Virginia? C'mon, guys, do the math. With all due respect to our friends in the Old Dominion, Virginia has 11 congressional seats. California has 52, with the prospect of one or two more after the next census. With only a little, fully constitutional noodling, a Democratic redistricting could write as many as six California GOP seats out of existence. That's more than the entire Virginia Republican delegation. No wonder Thomas felt compelled to deliver a little strategic two-by-four to the party temple.

In memoriam.

Whenever talk turns to the subject of Latino political power, the phrase "crossover appeal" invariably comes up. Partisan casting directors long for candidates faithful to their heritage, but with the leadership skill and personal magnetism to transcend the label of "Latino politician." In short, a Joe Serna type. The two-term Sacramento mayor, who died prematurely last month at the age of 60, was one of a rare breed of leader whose loss is felt as keenly in the fields as it is in the hallowed halls of government. The Stockton-born farm worker's son who toiled the fields himself, Serna burned with activism and soon was drawn into the orbit of the late Cesar Chavez. Activism, and ambition, led him to Sacramento city government where, after a losing mayoral bid in 1983 and a stint on the Sacramento City Council, Serna won the city's top job in 1992. As mayor, Serna was a relentless booster for his city, personally lobbying to bring major sporting events and negotiating a financial deal that kept the National Basketball Association Kings in Sacramento. Serna was also a pioneer of mayoral activism in public education. He personally engineered a housecleaning of Sacramento Unified School District's dysfunctional school board, an effort that has paid off in higher test scores and long-delayed voter approval for a massive new school construction bond. Perhaps most strikingly, Serna was able to accomplish all this while never losing sight of where he came from. As death drew near last month, Serna reportedly asked that a photo of Chavez be moved near his bed at home, and hundreds of farm workers bused in from all over the state to pay their respects. "We had a great love for this man," said one memorial pilgrim. "May God take care of him, just like Cesar."

"When you win, you win with humility. When you lose, you lose with dignity."

Joe Serna, Jr.
1939–1999

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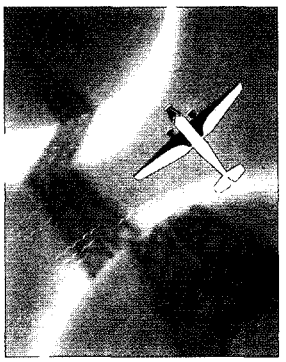
Full circle. *So you're* sitting there with the other 26 San Francisco Republicans waiting for the November Central Committee meeting to begin when who strides through the door but Mayor Willie Brown. Willie Brown ... the one-man Republican night terror. The man who took Republican votes to become speaker of the Assembly nearly two decades ago, then double-crossed the GOP the very next year by engineering a cooked reapportionment. The man you've been running against ever since. There he is, all smiles and concern, and amazingly, he asks you to endorse his re-election campaign against write-in wonderkind Tom Ammiano. Even more amazingly, you find yourself answering ... yes. That's right: The San Francisco Republican Party has endorsed Willie Brown for mayor. In the ultimate "lesser of two evils" decision, party leaders decided to back Brown over Ammiano, the liberal supervisor who won a spot in the December runoff after a whirlwind write-in campaign. Brown, of course, ain't exactly Barry Goldwater, either, but after a little tough-on-drugs chat, the committee concluded that, compared with Ammiano, Brown was the soul of moderation. "You have to deal with the world as you find it," said county GOP chair Don Casper in announcing the endorsement, which was not without its dissenters. Oh, there's one more little capper to this caper. Before going ahead with the endorsement, the party leaders checked around with some of their pals in Sacramento. Among those who signed off was Senate GOP leader Jim Brulte (R-Rancho Cucamonga), another Republican victim of Brown's political wizardry. Now we know what happened to Houdini's aura after that fateful punch in the stomach.



Foreign affairs. Governor Gray Davis' first international trade mission is in the books, a two-week jaunt that took him to Great Britain, Greece, Israel and Egypt. Not surprisingly, the passenger manifest was packed with dignitaries, almost all of whom, by an amazing coincidence, were also major Davis contributors. Among the notables: Ron Berkle, Ralphs supermarket owner and large Davis contributor; Angelo Tsakopoulos, Sacramento developer and large Davis contributor; Art Pulaski, California Labor Federation chief whose organization was an important ... well, you get the picture. Remarkably, there was one major Davis benefactor who didn't make the trip — Don Novey, the head of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association. Of course, there's no reason to have Novey along. Trade missions generally don't include lengthy colloquy on the finer points of double bunking. But lest you think Novey's absence proves the trip was not a junket, know this: He was asked — he just declined the invitation. Seems CCPOA and their buddy the guv are a bit on the outs these days. Perhaps the highlight of the trip was Davis' jaunt to the Palestinian Territory in Gaza where he met with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. After the meeting, Davis emerged to be photographed holding hands with Arafat, although the look on Davis' face as the shutter snapped suggests he was more interested in being "just friends." Maybe that's why he made sure everyone knew he also "really hit it off" with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak in a meeting later in the day.

"Every dogma has its day, but ideals are eternal."
—Israel Zangwill, English writer

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Looking ahead:

O Hope! O Hosanna!

Forget reports of public cynicism growing as rapidly as the mountain of money behind young George W. Disregard pundits who predict even teenier turnouts for Y2K's election mega-slugfest. There's a new century a-coming, a time of new promise for reinvigorated civic activism — so say academics who track this sort of thing.

At a recent *Campaigns & Elections* seminar in Las Vegas, **Bryan Reece**, a poli-sci professor at Cerritos College, spread the word of hope for widespread "virtual volunteerism" to a roomful of political professionals getting their tuneups for the 2000 season.

While some seminar pros said the Internet's biggest use in 2000 would be as a tool for opposition research, and others saw Web sites primarily as fund-raising magnets, Reece trumpeted the Internet's potential for attracting and organizing campaign volunteers.

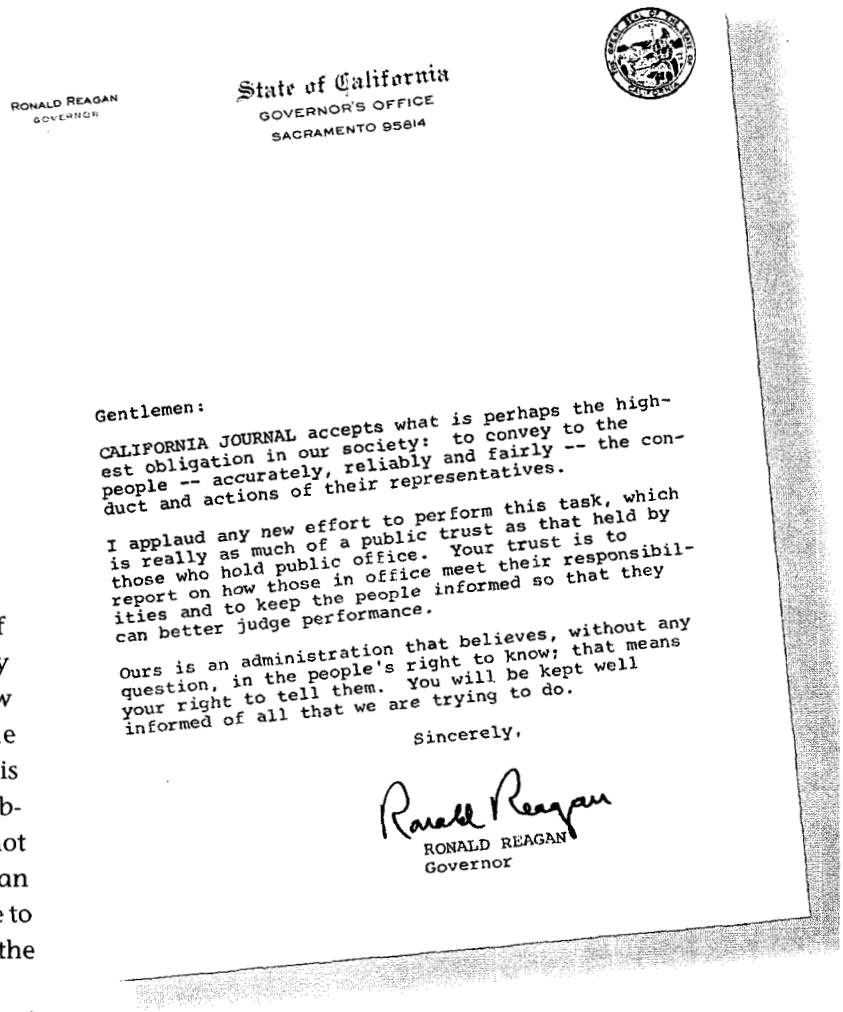
Studies show that 55 percent of volunteers who signed up via the Internet had never before worked on a campaign, he said. "There's a brand-new group of people out there who historically have been on the sidelines but now will get involved through the Internet," Reece said. The bonus is that once it's determined that Web-savvy volunteers are legit — and not spies from the other camp — they can be put to work using their expertise to snare other volunteers through the Internet.

— Cynthia H. Craft

At 30 years:

A noble profession indeed

Included in the *Journal's* first issue, January 1970, is a letter from Governor Ronald Reagan congratulating *CJ* for pursuing the high calling of keeping the public informed. My, how times have changed.



RONALD REAGAN
GOVERNOR

State of California
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Gentlemen:

CALIFORNIA JOURNAL accepts what is perhaps the highest obligation in our society: to convey to the people -- accurately, reliably and fairly -- the conduct and actions of their representatives.

I applaud any new effort to perform this task, which is really as much of a public trust as that held by those who hold public office. Your trust is to report on how those in office meet their responsibilities and to keep the people informed so that they can better judge performance.

Ours is an administration that believes, without any question, in the people's right to know; that means your right to tell them. You will be kept well informed of all that we are trying to do.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

RONALD REAGAN
Governor

Quotables.....

"They being the only voters."

— Former GOP Governor Pete Wilson, commenting sarcastically on the possibility that the George W. Bush campaign is avoiding his endorsement because he might poison the well with Latino voters.

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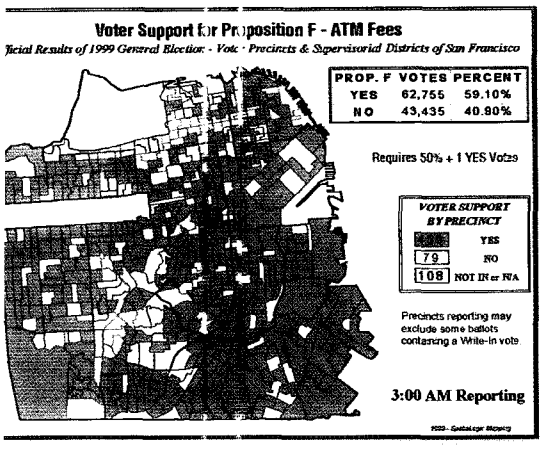
Trends:

Playing to the crowd

"Targeting voters" is all the rage these days among fashionable, up-to-the-nanosecond politicos. Why, a trend-setting consultant can't even cast a simple glance around the precinct without mentally aiming a bull's-eye at one voting bloc or another. Is there a dog park in the neighborhood? Then gussy up the mailers with glossies of the candidate with his golden retriever. Is there a glut of senior housing? Snap your candidate enjoying a sunny stroll with her elderly parents.


Voter Support for Proposition F - ATM Fees
Official Results of 1999 General Election - Vote - Precincts & Supervisorial Districts of San Francisco
PROP. F VOTES PERCENT
YES 62,755 59.10%
NO 43,435 40.90%
Requires 50% + 1 YES Votes
VOTER SUPPORT BY PRECINCT
YES
79 NO
108 NOT IN or N/A
Precincts reporting may exclude some ballots containing a Write-In vote
3:00 AM Reporting

The key is to dip into the stream of information out there that reveals voting behavior, likes and dislikes — and then play to the crowd. Increasingly, technology firms are making this easier by tapping into the information explosion and churning out quick-as-a-wink products and services.

On November 2 in San Francisco, for example, a political junkie hanging out at Election Central could track, deep into the wee hours, how each of the 646 precincts voted for mayor, district attorney and a litter of propositions. All one needed do was keep an eye on one of two 10-foot by 14-foot video projection screens and watch colors change on giant, blown-up maps of the city's political landscape.

A Northern California firm called SpatiaLogic translated the city's incoming vote counts into corresponding colors and beamed them up, with frequent updates. The result was a parade of visual information, a kaleidoscope of colors that reflected the diversity of the city's vote — with one notable exception: Proposition F, the measure to outlaw ATM surcharges. After colorizing those results, "The whole city map was red," said **Charlie Lindauer**, SpatiaLogic's mapping specialist.

Let's see now, how about a broadcast — citywide — of an ad showing the candidate bashing a bank machine?

— Cynthia H. Craft

By the numbers

San Francisco's mayoral race

3 The number of every 10 voters who marked ballots for somebody other than Mayor Willie Brown Jr.

4 0% Citywide voter turnout.

30% Average voter turnout in neighborhoods where Brown's support is strongest.

3% Percent of Chinese-American voters who cast ballots for Brown.

$3.5 Average amount the candidates spent per vote to reach the city's 200,000 voters.

$1 85 Average amount spent by Clint Reilly for every vote he received.

$4 . . 0 Reilly's total campaign bill for fourth-place finish.

$2 , 0 0 0 Total campaign bill for Tom Ammiano, the second-place finisher who will face Brown in Dec. 14 runoff.

4 3 4 Average amount spent by Ammiano for each write-in vote he received.

Source: www.sfgate.com

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Wading into troubled waters

by Sherry Bebitch Jeffe

The announcement by Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa that he is a candidate for mayor of Los Angeles in the 2001 election was low-key. There was little fanfare; no photo op with the candidate amongst a multi-ethnic L.A. crowd. Any hoopla would have been upstaged by the fireworks emanating from the Los Angeles Unified School District. Any press conference would have exposed Villaraigosa to unpleasant questions about the bitter fight over control of the largely Latino district, which has pitted the mostly Anglo school board against LAUSD's Superintendent Ruben Zacarias and many of the city's Latino political leaders.

Here's what happened. And why. And what the schools' mess could mean for the termed-out speaker's political future.

The immediate crisis flared over the Belmont Learning Complex, a $200 million high school being built on a former oil field west of downtown Los Angeles. Last spring, tests conducted on the site showed contamination from explosive and toxic gases, undetected before construction.

These fumbles occurred before Zacarias was put in charge almost three years ago, but other environmental problems were uncovered on his watch. In October, it was disclosed that the district was acquiring another, more contaminated school site—without briefing the board. LAUSD also missed the deadline for claiming nearly $1 billion in state funds.

Frustrated, the school board—whose new "reform" majority was elected with the support of L.A. Mayor Richard Riordan—voted behind closed doors to transfer day-to-day authority over district management to real-estate attorney and former board member Howard Miller, marginalizing Zacarias. Then board members voted 4-3 to buy out the superintendent's contract. The clumsy treatment of Zacarias by the rookie-dominated board infuriated Latino leaders. Said Antonia Hernandez of MALDEF, "There has been a lack of respect afforded to the Latino community throughout this process." Villaraigosa offered himself as a mediator between the warring factions—the better to position himself as a peacemaker able to lead L.A.'s diverse constituencies.

Villaraigosa's shuttle diplomacy contained both risks and opportunities for his fledgling candidacy. The viability of his mayoral quest depends on his ability to reach out beyond his Latino political base to L.A.'s more moderate and conservative voters. However, Latinos largely view Zacarias as a community icon, while many Angelenos, including those in vote-rich San Fernando Valley and Westside communities, are impatient with what they perceive as Zacarias' inability to turn the district around.

> Villaraigosa concluded that "this is a city that does not talk to one another. And when they do ... they are talking different languages"

Breaking with Zacarias allies could cost Villaraigosa support within the Latino community. But aggressively courting his ethnic constituency, as state Senator Richard Polanco—the Latino politician who has most loudly defended Zacarias—has done, could jeopardize the speaker's ability to appeal to L.A.'s largely Anglo electorate.

Jumping in to "calm the waters," as Villaraigosa explained it, he instead landed in the uncomfortable position of "the man in the muddle." Unable to broker a compromise, Villaraigosa said he'd concluded that "this is a city that does not talk to one another. And when they do talk to one another, they are talking different languages."

Later, in a carefully hedged statement, the speaker indicated his willingness to consider breaking up the behemoth district, a proposal endorsed by Latino community activists, including Polanco.

Ultimately a deal was closed by Vicki Castro, the only Latino on the board, to ease in renowned educator Ramon Cortines as interim superintendent on January 15.

Villaraigosa was unable to resolve the LAUSD's impasse because he found himself mediating without clout. That is partly due to the emasculation of the speakership in the era of term limits. In politics, a lame duck gets no respect, regardless of his title. Even earlier, more powerful Assembly speakers discovered that strength under the Capitol dome doesn't necessarily translate into muscle elsewhere.

As a result of his attempts at conciliation, Villaraigosa has gained more visibility in the local media than his legislative office would normally afford him. But higher visibility means early stumbles have a wider audience.

Contributing editor Sherry Bebitch Jeffe teaches at the Claremont Graduate University. *The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the* California Journal.

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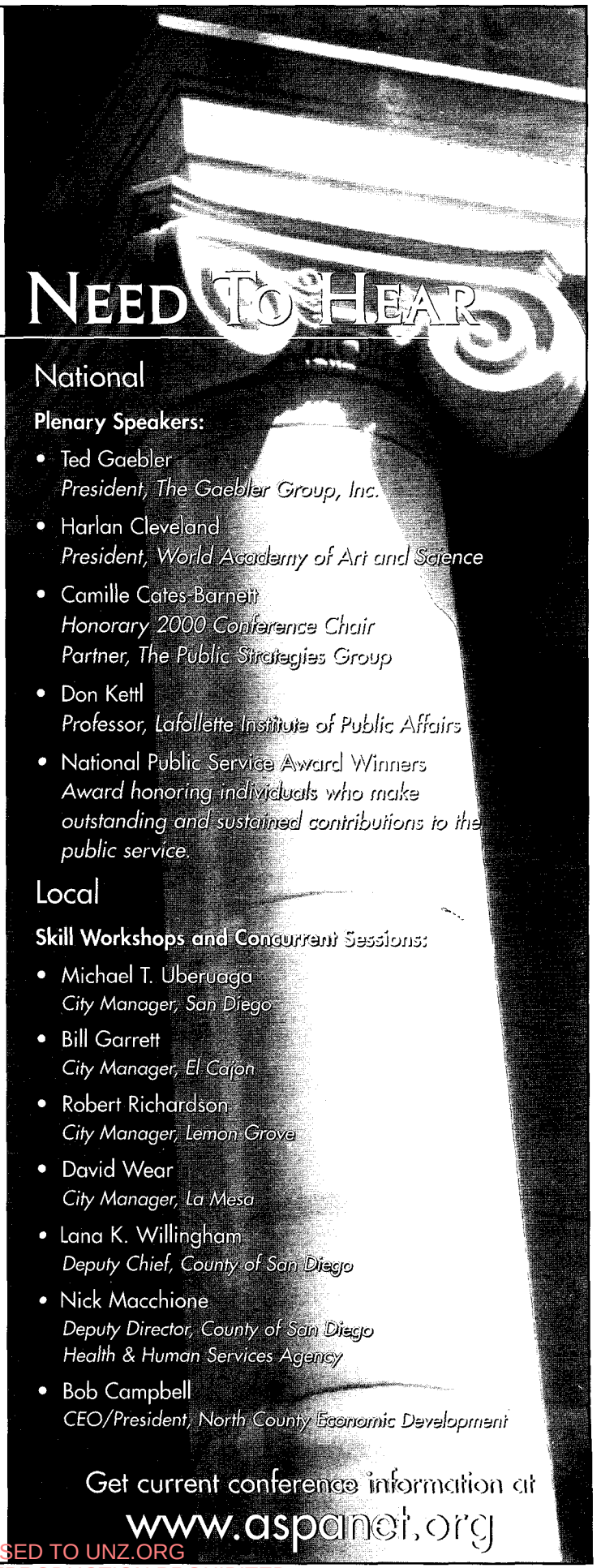

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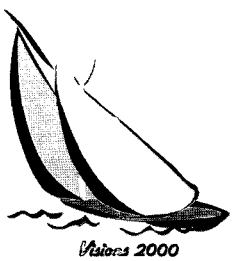

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The no-party

In steadily increasing numbers, Californians are declaring their independence from the two major political parties. Can Democrats and Republicans win the allegiance of the politically uncommitted, or will California's new nickname be "The Decline-To State?"

by Steve Scott

In the early spring of 1996, California's astute voters got something of a shock as they thumbed through the thick official booklet describing the propositions that would appear on that March's primary ballot. There, joined together in a united front, were the names of two people vastly more accustomed to arguing with each other. John Herrington, then-chairman of the state Republican Party, has a pedigree that included leadership of the very conservative GOP grass-roots group, the California Republican Assembly. Bill Press, then state Democratic Party chair, is so liberal his next job was as the "house lefty" on the CNN political talk show "Crossfire."

What had brought these two seemingly intractable foes together was their opposition to Proposition 198, the voter initiative seeking to institute an open, or blanket, primary for California. Herrington and Press had, in fact, made joint appearances against 198 in some of the

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system

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state's key media markets. Press had denounced the open primary as "dangerous to the political process." Herrington said the initiative would limit voter options by driving candidates to "the meaningless middle."

When Democratic and Republican leaders join together on an issue, it often has the effect of galvanizing the electorate across party lines, and so it was in this case. Voters in the "meaningless middle," as well as many on the sides, concluded that anything both parties hated so much couldn't be all bad, and they *approved* Proposition 198 by a 60-40 margin. Even in a state with an historically weak level of party identification, the success of the open primary was a surprising declaration of independence that, in the minds of some analysts, could presage a new era of political nonalignment for California's electorate.

"We have the potential to have as many as a third of the voters become independents," said Bruce Cain, director of the Institute for Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. "They're going to see no advantage to claiming a particular political identification."

We have the potential t many as a third of th become independents,
— Bruce Cain of UC Berkele

The incredible shrinking base

While the rate of statistical defection from the two major parties has hardly reached flood levels, it does qualify as a steady stream. At the beginning of the 1990s, more than 89 percent of registered voters listed themselves as either Democrats or Republicans. By 1999, that figure had dropped to 82 percent. The portion of the electorate declining to state any preference — currently near 13 percent — is almost half again as large now as it was in 1990 (See graph, page 13). Three new minor parties qualified for ballot status during the decade — the Green, Natural Law and Reform parties — and total minor-party registration more than doubled in that time. Nearly 300,000 Californians are registered in the American Independent Party, whose historic profile has been ultra-conservative.

"In 1996, the largest registration increases [in percentage terms] were decline-to-state and the American Independent Party," said Democratic political consultant Larry Levine, one of the Assembly Democrats' number crunchers that year. "Ninety percent of the 250,000 who registered American Independent are under 50 years old [and] vote like Democrats. They're attracted by the word 'independent.'"

More striking than mere registration numbers is the degree to which changing voter attitudes toward the two political parties track with voters' overall disenchantment with politics and government. A Field Institute poll issued in April of this year revealed that, while voters had a generally more favorable view of Democrats than Republicans, only about a third of those polled said it makes "a great deal" of difference which party runs the country. More than a quarter of all those polled — and nearly half of those not aligned with the major parties — believe it makes little or no difference which party is in power. Some of these disaffected Californians have already checked out of participation in politics, but another chunk forms the core of a movable voting bloc that, political professionals warn, the parties ignore only at their peril.

"There is a range of people — independents or weak partisans — bouncing back and forth from election to election," said Paul Maslin, Governor Gray Davis' political pollster, to a recent Field Institute seminar. "You see that kind of volatility, you'd better pay attention to it."

Brand loyalty

Californians have never been much for party loyalty. The 1996 open-primary law was, in fact, a take on cross-filing, which existed in California until the early 1950s and, in 1946, gave incumbent Governor Earl Warren the nominations of both the Democratic *and* Republican parties. Despite the abolition of cross-filing in 1951, party identification remained especially weak in California as the state's voters backed Republicans in statewide and national contests while electing more Democrats to fill local and legislative seats. The disassociation with the two parties began to intensify in the 1970s and '80s, as first the Democrats, and then the Republicans found themselves identified with positions seen as out of the California mainstream: for the Democrats, opposition to the death penalty; for Republicans, opposition to abortion and gun control.

"What you had in the 1980s was a decline in those who self-identify as liberals," said Cain. "Increasingly on the Republican side, you now have people who don't want to self-describe as conservative."

Yet even as Californians themselves seem less enamored with conventional political label-making, the leadership of the two major political parties — both legislative and within the party apparatus — has, by most analyses, become even more polarized. National politics has become, to many, almost irretrievably partisan.

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ave as
oters

Policy areas previously considered off limits to the party wars — foreign policy, Social Security, judicial appointments, presidential impeachment, etc. — have over the course of the last two decades been swept into the partisan maelstrom whipped up by a national political media that seeks "balance" by providing one megaphone each to the hard-left and the hard-right.

Here at home, the gulf between the parties and their constituencies also is widening. All four of the legislative caucus leaders — the Democrat Assembly speaker and Senate president pro tempore and the GOP minority leaders in both houses — hail from the wings, rather than the center. Until this year, when unified government and a $4 billion surplus greased the skids, the annual budget process had become an exercise in brinksmanship, regularly dragging on for weeks, and sometimes months, past the official budget deadline.

Like the legislative leadership, the current state chairs of the two major political parties — Republican John McGraw and Democrat Art Torres — come from their parties' activist wings. McGraw, in fact, drew an unusual challenge to his election from moderates after he was quoted in a San Francisco Catholic magazine saying abortion was "the issue of the century" for his party. The apparatus in both parties, as well as their financial bases, have increasingly devolved to interest groups and grass-roots organizations operating around small clusters of issues — organized labor in the case of Democrats, anti-abortion and pro-gun groups in the case of the Republicans.

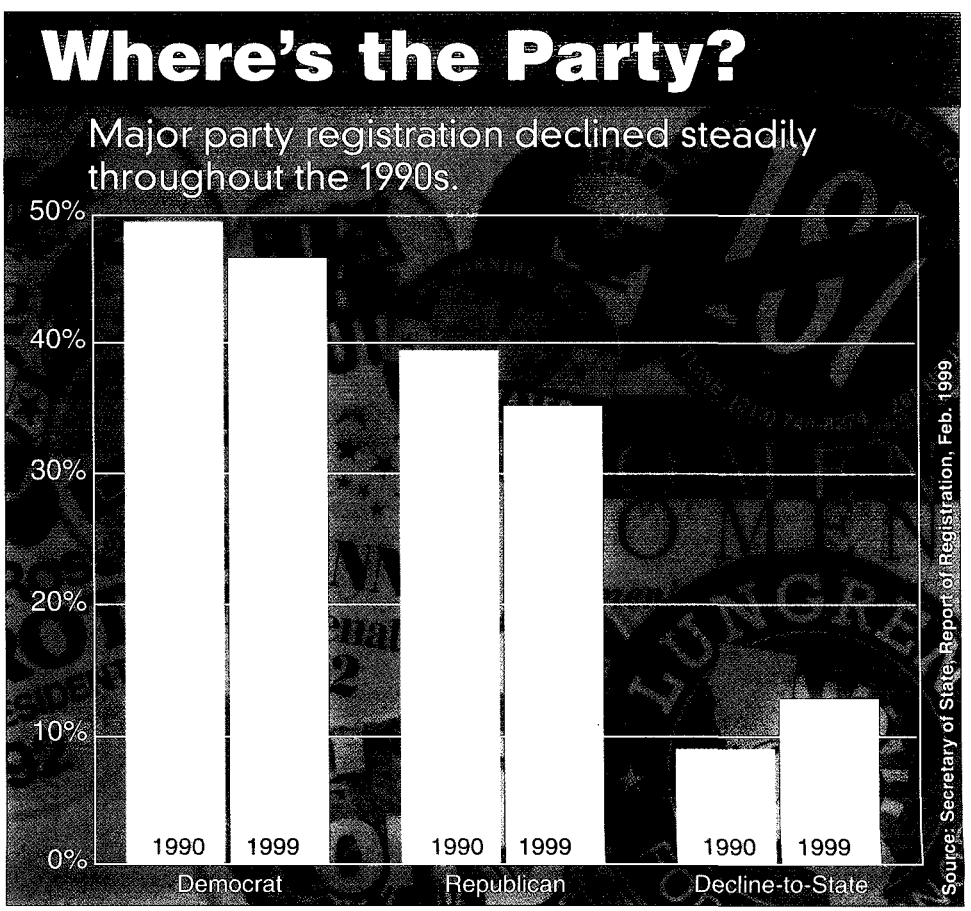
"Thirty or 40 years ago a state Republican chair would have said, 'I want to elect as many Republicans as possible,'" said political science professor Morris Fiorina, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. "Now people are self-starters. They come out of issue advocacy groups [and] come into politics a lot less to get elected than to achieve something."

The "politically homeless"

As the battles between the parties become ever more pitched, more and more of the electorate finds itself wandering into the ranks of what one lawmaker refers to as "the politically homeless." Primarily defining themselves as moderates, these voters range from those who are disgusted with interest-group politics to those who simply have less time and attention to devote to politics because of the complications of modern living. Judging from recent electoral history, these centrists tend to shy away from ideologues of either stripe and focus more on a politician's skills as a problem-solver.

"This is a group of people that wants things to work," said state Senator Debra Bowen (D-Torrance), whose coastal district includes a comparatively high percentage of decline-to-state voters. "They sit in traffic on [Southern California's Interstate] 405 and wonder, 'What is the problem?' They're not looking at what party did this. They want to know how come nobody can fix this."

It is also a group of voters increasingly coveted by both parties but, at least until now, more actively courted by Democrats. Governor Gray Davis' campaign was built around the image of Davis as a pragmatic centrist whose primary opponents — millionaire businessman Al Checchi and former Representative Jane Harman — were too liberal and whose general-election foe — Attorney General Dan Lungren — was too conservative.



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Davis followed up his centrist campaign with a relentlessly down-the-middle governing style, watering down or rejecting a flood of pent-up legislation from the more liberal state Legislature. When the dust cleared from his first session, the first Democratic governor in nearly two decades had actually vetoed a higher percentage of Democratic bills than Republican measures. Davis' centrist mantra also seems to be having an effect on lawmakers. One GOP-leaning political contributor recalls having met with four different Democratic candidates for one open Assembly seat next year. "Every one of them told me they were a moderate," joked the contributor.

"If you have to make a decision to keep those in the middle and lose some off this and that end of the table, that is a sound decision to make," said Garry South, Davis' 1998 campaign manager and his closest political adviser.

"It would be easy for a newcomer just watching to say 'well, there's not much of a difference between the parties.'"

— Bill Jones, California Secretary of State

Pragmatism vs. principle

Of course, this Democratic pragmatism is viewed by many Republicans as cynicism. While even the most conservative Republicans will concede that Democrats have been winning the short-term spin war, many maintain the feat was accomplished largely by co-opting issues that have historically been identified with the GOP. Issues such as welfare reform, fiscal austerity and crime — traditionally dear to the hearts of mainstream Republican voters — have been the issues upon which Democrats, from Bill Clinton on down, have been running on and winning. In essence, the Democratic Party is a leopard that has changed its spots.

"The Bill Clinton process of seeking to embrace many Republican positions has ceased to provide the clarity of positions between the two parties," said Secretary of State Bill Jones, California's highest-ranking Republican office holder. "It would be easy for a newcomer just watching to say well, there's not much of a difference between the parties."

Jones, who was able to attract crossover votes in his 1998 re-election victory, said the GOP's problem is not so much the party's principles as it is the party's messengers. While diplomatic enough not to name names, Jones said voters in the middle, as well as those in the parties' political bases, are driven more by their views of individual candidates than particular issues. This, he says, is especially true in California, which lacks the history of party discipline common in other states. If Texas Governor George W. Bush, the current leader in the GOP presidential sweepstakes, is able to reknit the broad coalition that elected Ronald Reagan president, the GOP will be OK in California.

"My belief is that ... if we just stay to the principles of our party, we will get our share of the voters in the middle," said Jones. "[But] we as Republicans have to follow up and not be afraid to follow through, and connect [our principles] back to the average person."

2000 and beyond

So what does the future hold for the two-party system in California? Well, perhaps surprisingly, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that it is still far from dead. The same Field poll that showed voters disconnecting with

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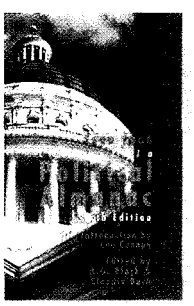
California Political Almanac

1999-2000 edition



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the political process also showed an increase in the number of Californians who believed there are "important differences in what the Democratic and Republican parties stand for." Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that moderate "swing" voters may not be quite as volatile as the Davis camp believes. Ray Wolfinger, a political scientist at University of California, Berkeley, has researched voter attitudes and found that the bulk of centrist voters lean either to the Republicans or to the Democrats, and usually wind up voting their leanings. Only about 5 percent of the electorate, says Wolfinger, can be classified as true independents.

"Most people who start out by calling themselves independents will concede they're closer to one party or another," said Wolfinger. "The true neutrals are basically nonparticipants."

Another sign that the two parties still have standing with centrist voters is their demonstrable unwillingness to embrace any of the minor-party alternatives. Although American Independent Party registration hovers near 2 percent, the AIP gubernatorial candidate in 1998 — Nathan Johnson — got less than one-half of 1 percent of the vote. Reform Party chair emeritus Judy Duffy says her party is "middle of the road" on issues. But its identification with the likes of H. Ross Perot, Jesse "The Body" Ventura and, more recently, Pat Buchanan and Donald Trump, has dimmed its credibility as a true alternative, derided by political comedian Will Durst as "the Chock Full Of Nuts Party." And though much was made of this year's special-election win by former Green Audie Bock (see story, page 24), the Green Party itself failed to make a dent in California in either 1996 or 1998 despite two marquee candidates at the top of the ticket — Ralph Nader in the '96 presidential campaign and former Congressman Dan Hamburg in the '98 race for governor.

"I am surprised, given the number of decline-to-state voters, how few of them carry out that sentiment when they get into the voting booth," noted Bowen. "Most people say that, if they want to make a difference, they have to choose between the two parties."

While the two parties will likely remain dominant, their role in framing ideological debates could further dwindle if the center continues to swell. Politicians running on the basis of their ideological purity, as Lungren did in 1998, will earn voters' respect, but not their votes. And political conventions stacked with hard-core party activists will bear less and less resemblance to the top-of-the-ticket nominees for whom they cheer.

"You have to win the allegiance of people," said Fiorina. "If both parties are playing to the 'wing nuts,' ordinary people are going to say a pox on both your houses."

Steve Scott is political editor of California Journal. *Comments on this story may be sent to* edit@statenet.com.

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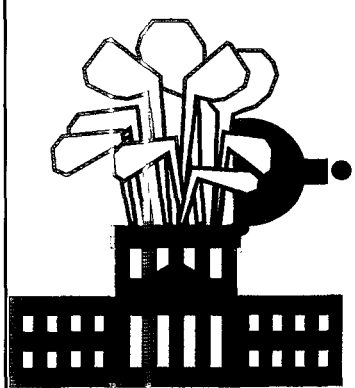

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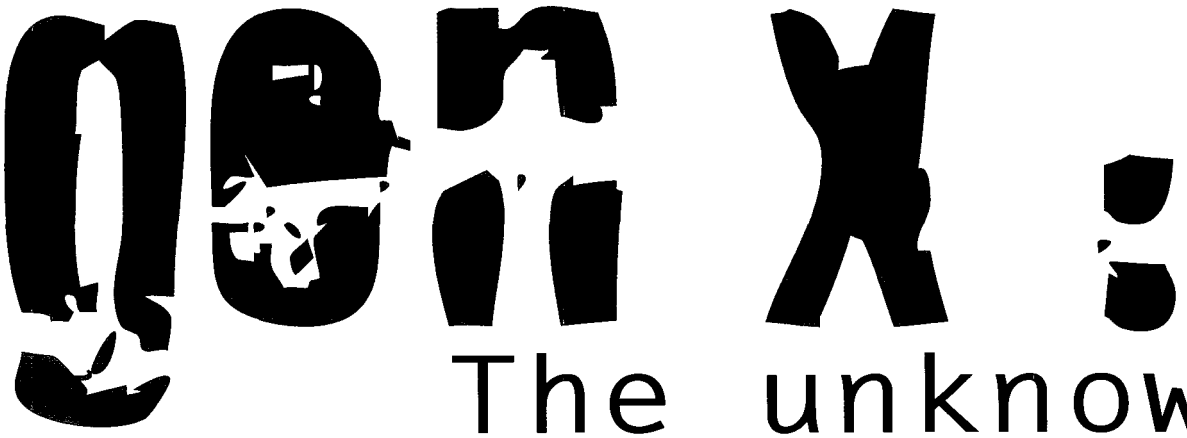

The unknown quantity

Three years ago, 29-year-old Matt Moretti, a Democrat, made a career choice that most people his age shun: He ran for public office. He did so with the aid of a longtime political consultant, Steve Kovacik, who helped Moretti launch his first-time bid for the state Assembly. But what the veteran Kovacik couldn't do for Moretti was lend a positive spin to the dispassion many Americans — especially those aged 20 to early 30s — today

Xers are getting older, and they still don't care about politics. But that doesn't mean they won't be a factor in the 21st century.

by Noel Brinkerhoff

feel about voting and becoming politically engaged. Only a generation ago, in Kovacik's prime, individuals were committed to the act of voting, even pitching in on campaigns. Can that kind of enthusiasm be recaptured, Morretti wondered? Can we turn the tide for younger Americans in particular — those of the much-maligned cohort known as Generation X?

"I want as many people as possible to go out and vote, but I don't know how to get [Xers] to feel that way," says Moretti, who narrowly lost his 1996 Assembly race in southern Sacramento County. "I just don't know how that can happen."

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Does anyone?

Today, the only certainty about the members of Generation X — often described as those ranging in age from 20 to 34 — is the overarching sense of uncertainty that surrounds them as a political entity. Gen Xers are approaching a time of political maturation as 30- and 40-somethings while continuing to remain more detached from politics than any previous generation this century. Which begs the question, when it comes to elections and political decision-making, "Will Gen X be a force?" Though, to be fair, such a question can also be shaped in terms of "to what *degree* will they be a force?" given that Xers are far smaller in numbers (50 million) than the age group they will ultimately replace (Baby Boomers: 80 million).

But no matter how the question is framed, the reality is that Generation X will be a "force" of some kind (good or bad) and to some degree (significant or moderate) in coming decades. This notion may surprise some people since most discussions of this age group skip over the tangible roles and influence they may have in the political world. All too often, it's been said that "they don't care about politics — end of story." But many Xers are voting today, albeit a small percentage of them, and, if history is any guide, perhaps more will tomorrow. Others, meanwhile, will never cast a ballot in their lives but may find other ways to affect change (see sidebar below). Regardless, Generation X has a history, a set of attitudes that deserves examination — to better understand what the "X" in Gen X represents to politics and for the future of elections both inside and outside of California.

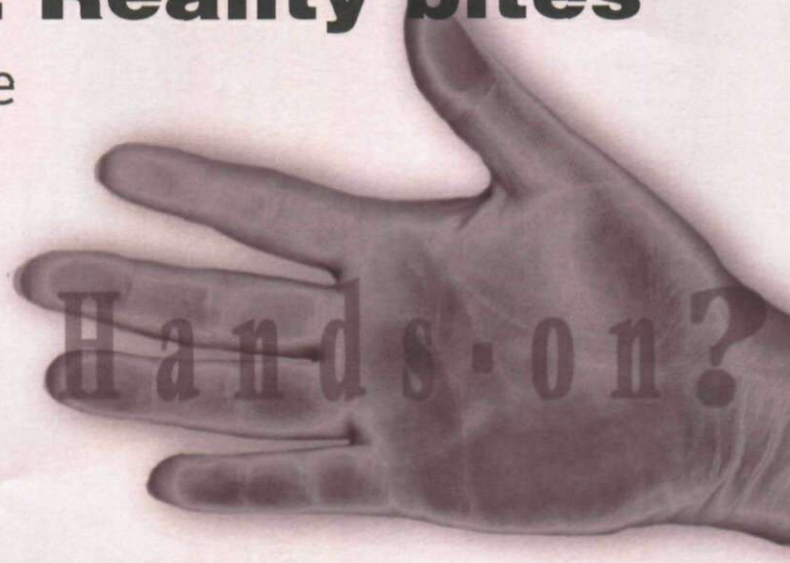
"It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine...."
— R.E.M.

Although the term was branded upon Generation X with broader social-economic implications in mind, the moniker "slacker" is one that still fits this group of Americans when it comes to voting. Today, Xers make up only 15 percent of the California electorate, while at the same time representing the state in terms of its average age — 33 years old — making California the third-youngest state in the nation and, as one analyst put it, "ground zero" for the Gen X political malaise.

"There's no question that [Xers] are much less inclined to be involved and interested in politics than other groups," says survey director Mark Baldassare of the Public Policy Institute of California. According to polling data collected in September by Baldassare, only 28 percent of Xers say they always vote, compared to 71 percent of those 50 and older. Likewise, only 14 percent of Xers say they follow public affairs, compared to 46 percent of the 50-and-up crowd.

Volunteerism: Reality bites

Xers are said to be volunteering more than others, but are they?



By Noel Brinkerhoff

In the past couple of years, the dialogue on Generation X has often included the assertion that many young people today are devoting their time and energy to volunteer activities. When mentioned, it is done so to demonstrate that there really is more to Xers than apathy and self-gratification. Volunteerism also helps refute the argument that Xers are a "lost" generation without a sense of community and, in part, explains why they are bypassing the gridlocked world of politics. Through hands-on work in nongovernmental programs, the argument goes, Xers can more readily see results from their hard work.

But to just how many Xers does this notion apply?

In the September issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, New America Foundation President Ted Halstead insisted that "Although Xers have forsaken conventional political participation en masse, it would be a mistake to assume, as

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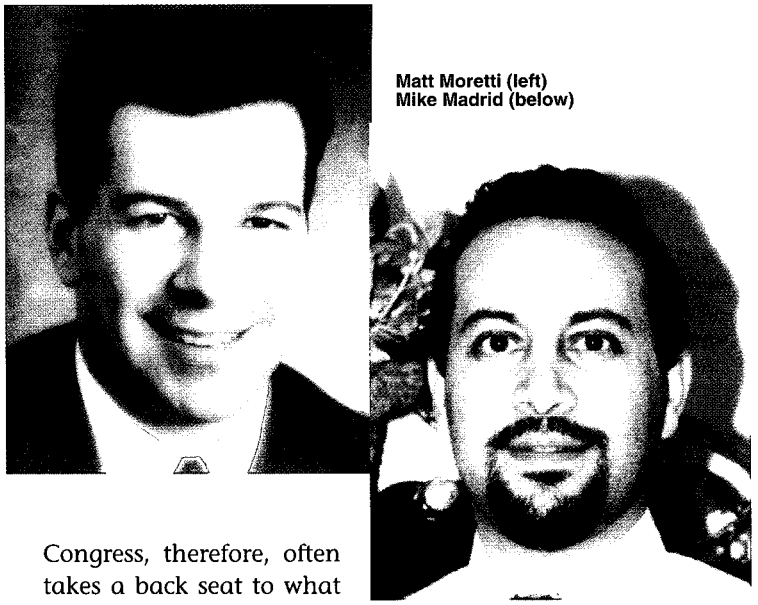
Of course, many political scientists argue that it is quite normal for people in Gen X's current age bracket to be less attuned to politics and voting than older individuals. However, research suggests that Xers possess higher levels of cynicism and apathy for politics than earlier generations of the same age (see the anthology, "After the Boom: The Politics of Generation X"). This quality is attributed, in part, to the atmospherics that surrounded Xers while growing up. For instance, whereas older Americans had the paragons of Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy to admire, Xers had Nixon, Ford, Carter, Bush and Clinton — presidents known more for their shortcomings than their ability to lead and gain respect. The exception is Ronald Reagan, who was liked by many Xers. But even Reagan finished out his term in office with a cloud over his head because of the Iran-Contra scandal and the brewing savings-and-loan debacle, leaving some Xers further jaded by the state of American politics.

In speculating why they're so politically disengaged, some Xers look elsewhere for an answer and don't pull any punches when assessing blame. "The reason so many members of our generation aren't interested in politics is because politics isn't usually packaged to feed our addiction to entertainment," says Don Nash, 34, a network news producer. "We are a generation raised on MTV, television sitcoms and blockbuster films. For many of us, substance has become secondary to style. The latest budget battle in Congress, therefore, often takes a back seat to what the hot sitcom characters Rachel and Ross did on 'Friends' last night. It's a pathetic state of affairs, but it's the truth."



Matt Moretti (left)
Mike Madrid (below)

"You're livin' in your own private Idaho...."

— B-52s

In addition to the dearth of political leadership and affects of media exposure, there is still another argument many do that they are wholly apolitical. There is considerable evidence to suggest that volunteerism and unconventional forms of political participation have increased among young adults."

Really? So, where are the numbers? Unfortunately, Halstead didn't provide any.

Again that same month in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, a similar assertion was made in a collection of stories on Generation X. Richard Thau, the executive director of a nonpartisan Gen X advocacy group called the Third Millennium, argued that "Despite our notorious political apathy, young adults have long channeled a sense of community into local volunteer projects. It may be tough to get a 25-year-old to vote, but enlisting him or her in teaching the illiterate to read, feeding the homeless or visiting the homebound elderly is a cinch. Perhaps a corps of talented leaders will some day channel this localized involvement into a national political movement."

Perhaps they will. But again, where's the empirical evidence to support this notion that hope does exist in the jaded hearts of so many Xers? Well, that's a little sticky.

According to Diana Owen, an associate professor of political science, communications, culture and technology at Georgetown University, there is no conclusive proof that volunteerism is any higher among Xers than other groups. "Frankly, [from] most of the data I've looked at, I can't say they are doing more," says Owen, who studies Generation X. "It [the evidence] is so mixed."

A few years ago, Peter Hart Research Associates released a study that showed volunteer activities were on the rise among Xers. But there have been other surveys, Owen says, that haven't supported this trend. Furthermore, some Xers who are participating in community activities aren't doing it for purely selfless reasons. Instead, Owen argues, some are doing it for "resumé-building" purposes — putting the time in, for example, to help inner-city youth because it will look good down the line on a job application.

For other Xers, meanwhile, the drive to make the world a better place may be there, but there's nothing that says it can't be joined to the desire to succeed. More than anything else, argues Mike Madrid, an analyst and former political director for the California Republican Party, Xers are avoiding politics because it lacks relevancy when it comes to changing things. "It's not that people don't want to make the world a better place — it's that they don't see politics as a vehicle to do that."

"If I want to protect the environment," he adds, "I'm going to go out and start an environmentally sensitive company that's going to make a million dollars a year *and* save the environment at the same time."

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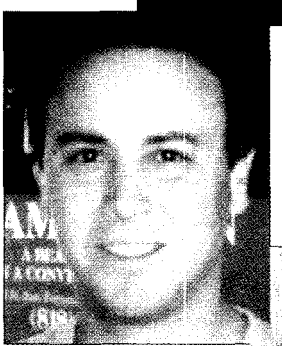
that helps explain a lot about Xers. While many Baby Boomers came of age during the momentous Vietnam War, the civil rights and Free Speech movements, Xers had no defining event to move them toward political participation. In fact, if there's anything that helped shape the attitudes of Generation X (especially those born in the '60s and early '70s), it was the roller coaster of economic events over the past 30 years — the long waiting in gas lines and crawl of stagflation in the '70s, the go-go climb of the Reagonomic '80s, and the recessionary crash and corporate downsizing of the early '90s.

"There's a very strong sense of economic insecurity that is motivating us." — Mike Madrid

Kathy Fairbanks



Don Nash

"I think we are a more confident and capable generation than most are willing to give us credit for," says Mike Madrid, 28, an analyst and former political director for the California Republican Party. "But what underlies that confidence and capability is fear — the fear that that job might not be there. There's a very strong sense of economic insecurity that is motivating us."

Consequently, many Xers have developed a strong sense of self-reliance, knowing they can't rely on big government or big business to take care of them. "I don't think they're naive about their future," says Jody Fugii, 31, chief of staff for Democratic Assemblyman Michael Machado. "Everybody I know is into their 401Ks and outside investing and long-term health care."

According to a 1998 Associated Press poll, almost 90 percent of Xers support shifting some Social Security taxes into private investment accounts, while another examination by the *Los Angeles Times* showed that 80 percent of financial assets held by Xers were in stocks. Entrepreneurialism also is strong among those under 35, with the number of new businesses started by Xers ranging from 47 percent to 80 percent in recent years. Of course, a portion of the entrepreneurial drive is based in Silicon Valley and other high-tech regions, but not all of it. In fact, it is a mistake to overgeneralize — as some analyses tend to do — about Gen X and its place in the growing New Economy of computer manufacturing and Internet start-ups. While some Xers are doing quite well financially as engineers and designers, there are plenty of others — including many minorities — without four-year college degrees who are not part of the high-tech boom and who feel very insecure about their long-term outlook for employment, health insurance and pension benefits, according to a survey done this year for the AFL-CIO.

Jody Fugii

"We're living in a material world and I am a...."
— Madonna

When it comes to the issue of debt, Generation X displays something of a contradictory attitude. On a macro level, Xers are said to abhor deficit-spending policies after watching President Reagan and congressional Democrats mortgage their future in accumulating a trillion-dollar debt during the 1980s. Ask an Xer or anyone who's studied them and consistently their economic philosophy is described as fiscally conservative. And yet, this very same group of fiscal conservatives has no problem whipping out the plastic and racking up four- and five-digit deficits on their Visa or Macy's cards. For example, according to a 1997 analysis of consumer spending, the average debt on credit cards among twenty-somethings nearly tripled between 1990 and 1996.

Meanwhile, according to Republican analyst Bernd Schwieren, Xers have a more consistent philosophy on social issues. "They're very nonjudgmental, socially moderate," says Schwieren, who examines demographics and political trends for the Assembly Republican Caucus. "They basically have a 'live as you want to attitude.' There is no sense that there is a right way toward your life — there's probably dumb ways and good ways but the individual has to come to their own conclusion."

Schwieren adds that "race isn't a big issue for Xers" because they've grown up in more integrated communities and schools than earlier generations. They also tend to be more environmentally aware, thanks to growing up in the wake of the Green movement but are wary and insecure about marriage as a result of so many of their parents getting divorced. From 1965 to 1979 — the years in which Xers were born — the divorce rate in the United States more than doubled, leaving millions of Xers to grow up in single-parent households and as the nation's first group of "latch-key kids."

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"Hey! Ho! Let's go. What they want, I don't know...."

— The Ramones

So what does all this profiling mean for Generation X? Plenty, considering this is the way political campaigns operate in California — by demographically slicing potential voters into so-called "cluster groups" and targeting them with very specific messages. As Madrid points out, fading are the days when Democrats or Republicans counted solely on their loyal bases of support to win elections. "The new ones [campaigns] are going to say our base of support is with women 18 to 25, men 35 to 40 on this message, and communicating to smaller, select universes of people — more focused on our generation because it's a much more sophisticated part of the electorate [in terms of electronic communication]."

According to Schwieren, 50 percent of Xers registering to vote are going independent, and even among those who are registered with a party, there is little reluctance to weigh anchor, especially with California's open primary system. "I used to be pretty liberal,'" says Kathy Fairbanks, 33, a registered Democrat and vice president of media relations for the California Chamber of Commerce. "I'm not that way anymore. Whoever can solve the problem — Democrat or Republican — is going to get my vote."

This pragmatic, nonpartisan attitude is also representative of Xers outside of California, according to Diana Owen, an associate professor of political science, communications, culture and technology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., who has studied Generation X. "They are very fed up with political parties and established political institutions," she says. "They are more likely to vote for the candidate than the party."

But first, a candidate has to reach out and connect with Xers, either through television or the Internet — the two most common media viewed by Xers. Both have their challenges. With television, it's the increasing fragmentation of the viewing audience, thanks to the rise of cable and other "free-TV" networks, which makes it harder for campaigns to target people. For the first time in the history of television, Madrid points out, none of the three major networks can claim more than a third of the viewing audience, as more and more people tune into everything from UPN to the TV Food Network to ESPN.

And then there's the Internet, which many experts point to as a way to get more young people involved with politics. But that isn't nearly as easy as it sounds. Candidate Web sites need to meet Xers' high standards for ease of use, said Owens, who notices Xers losing patience with, and giving up on, hard to locate or navigate sites. Furthermore, as Fugii points out from her experience working on legislative campaigns, "You can't spam people because people are not happy with that kind of solicitation. That kind of direct contact is offensive and telling people you have an Internet site doesn't make them go there. You've got to find a way to connect with them, to make them want to be a part of that interactive medium."

Which still leaves the human element — the candidate — with a critical role in any campaign that targets Xers. After all, it remains to be seen just how deeply even the most slick, "Nikeized" political ad can touch a jaded 30-year-old who has seen literally thousands and thousands of commercials in his or her life. In 1992, when President Clinton connected with young voters, he did so more because of his personal style and approach than just the media his campaign employed (i.e. appearing on "Arsenio Hall" and MTV). Clinton is also a key example of how politicians can easily lose the support of young people if their behavior becomes a turn-off. Already, Owen has found that the generation coming behind Xers — Generation Y — is developing even worse attitudes about politics because of what it has seen in the media covering the Lewinsky affair, making them potentially even more cynical than their jaded predecessors.

"Life is so strange, destination unknown...."

— Missing Persons

Although it will be decades before anyone is sure what effect Gen X ultimately has on politics in California, a few things are becoming apparent based on what is already known. First of all, candidates and their campaigns will never be able to take for granted those Xers who do vote. Because party loyalty means nothing to the vast majority, Xers will easily jump from one partisan candidate to another, making elections more volatile and difficult to

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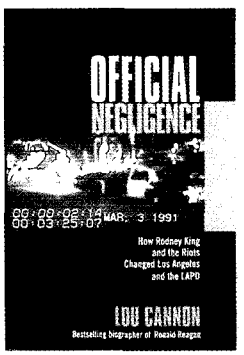

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"There's no strategy from either political party that I can see to get younger voters [to join]," — Tony Quinn, political analyst.

handicap, says Schwieren. They could also help strengthen the prospects for third-party candidacies, which occurred in Minnesota when Governor Jesse Ventura captured a significant number of young voters.

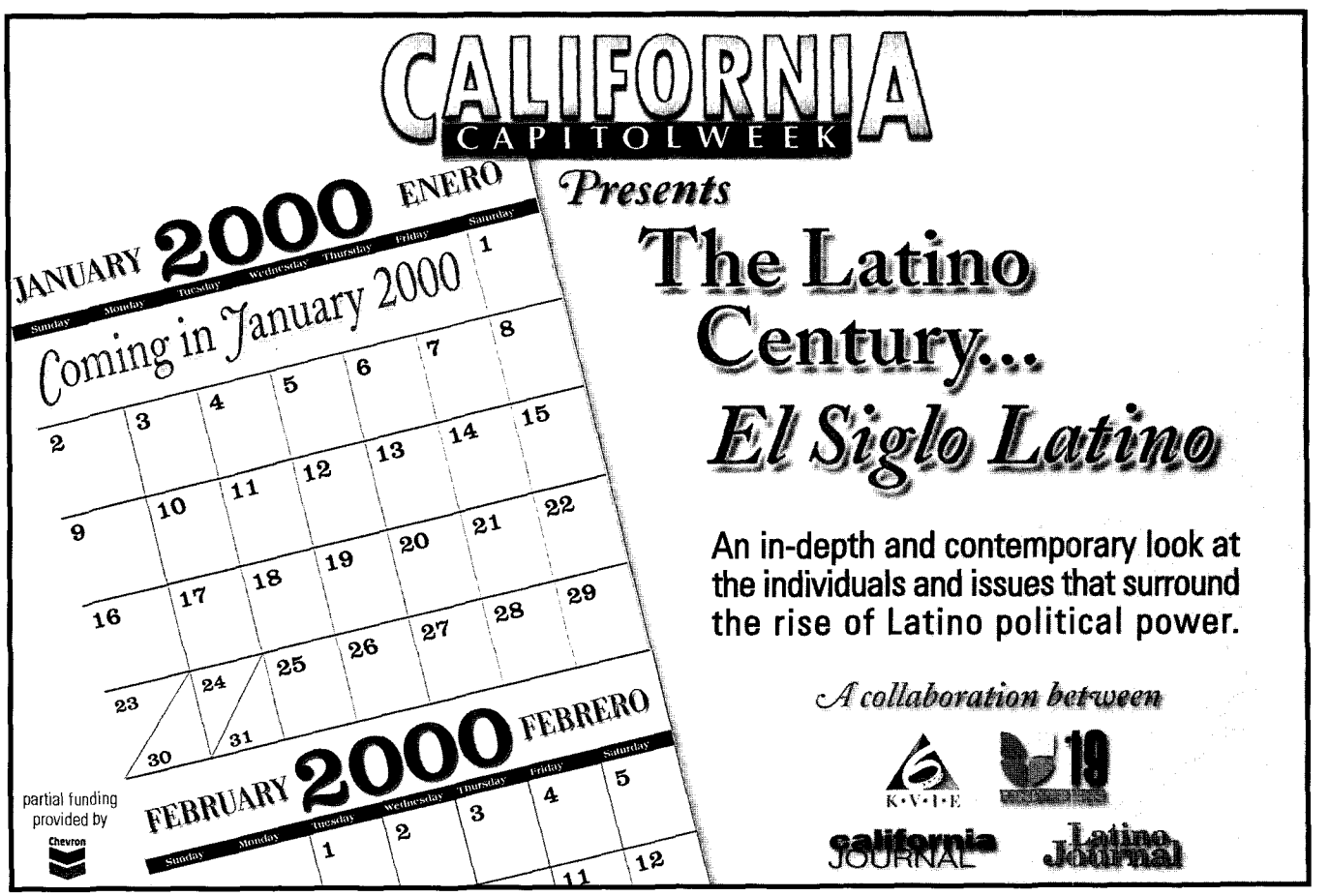
Looking down the road, both Schwieren and Madrid envision a time when someone like onetime-Green Party Assemblywoman Audie Bock is no longer an anomaly in the California Legislature. "Of the 80 Assembly districts, I could see maybe five or six third-party candidates winning some of these seats, especially in three-way contests," Schwieren says. "Particularly if you look in coastal districts, from the North Coast all the way down to San Diego." Of course, a lot will depend on how the two major parties try to win over Xers, which so far isn't happening. "There's no strategy from either political party that I can see to get younger voters [to join]," says Tony Quinn, a longtime political analyst. "They talk about it, but it isn't really there."

Which isn't to say there aren't potential messages for either Republicans or Democrats to use with Xers. For the Republican Party especially, following the drubbing it took in the 1998 election, courting young voters would be a way to rebuild itself by tapping into the entrepreneurial spirit that's so strong among many Xers. However, as Schwieren, Madrid and Quinn all agree, that can only happen if Republicans ditch the socially conservative, "preachy" image they've become saddled with. If they can't, that will leave the Democrats — in theory at least — in a better position to court Xers with their more socially tolerant image. "The Democrats have tried not to be just the tax-and-spend party, so in the fiscal matters they're not as vulnerable," says Quinn.

In fact, among those Xers who are registering with a political party, 35 percent are going Democratic, while only 11 percent are going Republican. However, according to Madrid, if the number of young Latinos — the fastest-growing group of new voters in California since the GOP-backed anti-immigration campaign of Proposition 187 drove them towards the Democratic Party — is taken out of the equation, Democratic registration among Xers drops to 15 percent. This means that among non-Latino Xers, the challenge is just as tough for Democrats as it is for Republicans to catch their eye.

"It's a group that's simply not going to let itself be captured by any political party," Schwieren says. "It's always going to be in play."

Noel Brinkerhoff is an associate editor of California Journal. *Comments on this story may be sent to* edit@statenet.com.



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Will the real Audie Bock please step forward?

As a rookie state assemblywoman, Audie Bock could once boast of being the most prominent Green Party official in the nation. Today, with her freshman year behind her, Bock can boast that she is a quick study — in the art of getting ahead. But will her decision to dump her Green Party affiliation and turn independent sit well with voters who flocked to her as an alternative to politics-as-usual?

By Emelyn Rodriguez

It was lunch time on a recent Friday, and Audie Bock — at once frenetic and focused — was rushing to her downtown Oakland office in the gleaming Elihu M. Harris state building, named for the man she dethroned to win her place in the California Assembly.

Usually relaxed and low-keyed, Bock that day appeared a bit weary, edgy, as if under siege. Perhaps the Oakland assemblywoman was still digesting the effects of her stunning announcement and all that followed: the back-to-back interviews, the radio shows, the flood of phone calls that inundated her district office and its skeleton crew of mostly new employees. Or perhaps Bock needed a breather before answering the question that had been asked many times that week: Why in heaven's name would she reject her historic standing as the country's only Green Party legislator to run instead as an independent?

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Illustration by Sandra Hoover

"When it was made obvious to me that I could [sit] out the primary-and still run in November with a full scale campaign, I said, 'Hey, this is a big advantage,'" said Bock, looking out from her office window at sweeping views of the Port of Oakland and fog-shrouded San Francisco. "It's a tactical decision to save time and money."

She won't say who advised her. But it appears that others, some whose motives are unknown, planted seeds that bore her decision. "Those advising her said it was more and more to her advantage not to have anything to do

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What is clear is that Audie Bock, a one-time political novice and novelty who arrived at the Capitol nine months ago on an Amtrak train wearing green and clutching sunflowers, has emerged from her cocoon.

with a third party," one insider said.

Assemblyman Dick Floyd (D-Wilmington), a friend and supporter of Bock, said he was among those who offered his opinion. "I might have been one of them that told her, if [the Green Party] won't be of any help to you, then separate," he said. "She made the right move. She made a move that says that I can represent everyone — Green, Republican, Democrat or decline-to-state — not just one narrow group. That's her job to represent those people in her area and their views."

Bock insists that she has not abandoned her progressive values. That her change of party is not a change of heart. That the only thing new is a political label.

Bock prides herself as an independent-minded maverick, one who abhors party labels. She generally votes based on personal — not party — principles. At times, this independent streak has put her in odd company with allies such as Assemblyman Rico Oller (R-San Andreas) and the National Rifle Association on at least one gun control measure; Assemblywoman Marilyn Brewer (R-Newport Beach) and Silicon Valley entrepreneur Ron Unz on campaign finance reform; and Assemblywoman Dion Aroner (D-Berkeley) and Americans for Death With Dignity on the issue of physician-assisted suicide.

"What a lot of people don't understand is that in open primaries, anybody could vote for anybody," Bock continued. "And for me what that means is that it's a full-scale dress rehearsal for the general election because you're not busy trying to get the votes of your own party. You're trying to make the best showing possible...If I don't campaign, I will not be noticed. So this is a way to make sure that not being noticed isn't fatal."

What she said, in not-so-many-words, was that she did not want to risk losing the battle of expectations. When public support for a candidate is shown to be less than enthusiastic, it often generates some bad press, which leads to more bad press. Pretty soon, donors lose confidence, campaign cash dries up and reporters write more about your financial problems than your campaign stumps. It is a graveyard spiral most are unable to pull out of.

A tactical decision

By skipping the primary, Bock hopes to skip not just the cost and the chaos, but also the scrutiny.

Though widely regarded as tactical, her decision has been lamented on all sides. And depending on one's perspective, it has been viewed as an act of desertion (of a budding and energized Green Party), desperation (willingness to do anything to stay politically viable and prove her election wasn't a fluke) or deliberation (a practical, calculated move to save limited campaign cash, maximize fundraising and broaden political appeal.)

What is clear is that Audie Bock, a one-time political novice and novelty who arrived at the Capitol nine months ago on an Amtrak train wearing green and clutching sunflowers, has emerged from her cocoon. A quick study, she has navigated the narrow corridors of the Legislature, collected bumps and bruises along the way, and in the end, emerged a slightly changed person.

For one thing, she has acquired a taste for politics and a burning desire to stay in office, a sharp departure from the political martyrdom that many Greens seem to prefer. She has accepted $1,000 from oil companies Tosco and Chevron, as well as a small donation from tobacco giant Philip Morris — taboo choices for Greens. She has silently shed the symbolic statements she once displayed with pride: the green outfits she wore daily in the Legislature and the green pens that she made a point to sign her name with on bills, memos and other correspondence.

And though she remains affable, charismatic and engaging — qualities that compensate for a host of political deficiencies — her easy and open presence has given way to a more measured, cautious approach.

Even her Oakland district office shows signs of Bock's metamorphosis. On one corner is a bulletin board with various newspaper clippings following her footsteps and a poster explaining the "Life Cycle of Legislation: From Idea Into Law."

The other side is akin to a "War Room," with a large district map displaying boundaries highlighted in lime green and a listing of ZIP codes of neighborhoods to be targeted with mailers. On a drawing board is a sophisticated media strategy outlining plans to push for more county transit funding. The plan is organized under three categories: "Our message," "Understood but not the public message," and "How we get there."

Lessons learned

It seems that the 54-year-old single mother and Harvard-educated Japanese film scholar has learned more than lawmaking during her short time at the Capitol. Among other things, she has grown media savvy and more accustomed to the constant journalistic scrutiny she has generated since her March upset victory over veteran politician Harris, a former Oakland assemblyman and mayor and the heavily favored Democratic nominee.

The 190,000-voter district that covers Alameda, Piedmont and most of Oakland has long been a Democratic stronghold, which made her special election victory all the more stun-

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ning. Democrats, who were embarrassed by their loss, call her election a fluke, a product of low voter turnout, campaign mistakes and an over-confident Democratic nominee. They vow to retake her seat.

They have also made her life at the Capitol less than ideal. Democrats are friendly face-to-face but have done everything they can to kill her only two bills and minimize her chances for re-election.

Bock enjoyed instant celebrity status in the wake of her surprise victory. She was the highest-ranking member of the Green Party in the country and the first third-party candidate elected to the state Legislature since 1917.

Greens were simply stunned and saddened by Bock's change of heart. While some were merely disheartened, others were so outraged that they asked for their contributions back.

"On a personal level, I am deeply, deeply disappointed," said Mary Mazzocco, an East Oakland resident and Green Party leader who says she won't be voting for Bock again. "I feel betrayed. I live in Audie's district. I signed her nomination papers. I endorsed her. I did all that because I thought it was important to have Green Party values represented in the Legislature. By abandoning the party, she is abandoning party values and making it harder for us to have a real alternative in this state to Democrats and Republicans."

A 'terrible blow'

However, some Greens said Bock's decision, however lamentable, is understandable. They say that money, and the emphasis on raising huge sums of it, were really to blame.

Former U.S. Congressman Dan Hamburg of Ukiah said that Bock's actions made strategic sense yet it was "a terrible blow" for Greens.

"I think from her perspective, she made the logical decision," said Hamburg, who served a single term as a Democrat in the House of Representatives and who last year was the Green Party's candidate for governor. "I think this underscores a need for [campaign finance] reform because American politics today on a state, national and local level is increasingly about money and fund-raising. I think it's exceptionally difficult for anyone outside the two-party system to compete."

Hamburg said he and many other Greens would have preferred to see Bock "fall on her sword," to lose with her principles and integrity intact, rather than dump her party affiliation.

"It's always noteworthy in American politics when a candidate stands on principle," he said. "For Greens around the state and the country, this is a terrible blow. The Greens who brought her to the dance feel that they were left in the lurch."

Bock has admitted that her rift with the Green Party began over fund-raising difficulties. Among her frustrations was the absence of a coherent policy on accepting campaign funds and the party's strong resistance to large organized events to raise money.

It made no difference, she con-

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Bock said it made no difference how bold or innovative her ideas were if she did not have the money to be heard.

cluded, how bold or innovative her ideas were if she did not have the money to be heard.

"There was resistance to doing anything other than very grass-roots level fund-raising and there wasn't really a policy established on how to do that," Bock said. "We were doing some small scale, kind of house party types of fund-raisers through the Green Party. That was nice but doing that sort of thing strictly with volunteers takes years to build up."

In the end, the Greens' grass-roots effort to raise cash through potlucks and garage sales just wasn't enough. At last count, Bock's campaign had raised less than $8,000, a pittance compared to the $400,000 to $500,000 needed to run an effective campaign.

Still Bock's decision to switch parties has not only angered some Greens but has also earned her other detractors as well. Her critics have raised questions about everything from her trustworthiness to her stands on issues.

Some African-Americans in Bock's district, especially those who already doubted her commitment to issues of importance to their community, such as local control and diversity, viewed the party switch as further proof that Bock was not genuine.

After all, when she first ran for the 16th Assembly District, Bock won support from some African-American voters with her strong opposition to a plan by state Senator Don Perata (D-Alameda) for a state takeover of the troubled Oakland School District — a move portrayed by some black leaders as a white power grab.

Recently, however, Bock was accused of turning her back on blacks and siding with the city's white leadership when she endorsed Oakland City Council member John Russo for city attorney over Jayne Williams, the African-American incumbent.

The Capitol culture

Gene Hazzard, a former Bock staff member, said that his former employer, once bright-eyed and idealistic, was transformed by a Capitol culture of heartless pragmatism and victory at all costs. Bock got so caught up in winning, he said, that she turned her back on loyal supporters and those who worked hard to help her succeed.

"What used to be Audie's strength was her person," said Hazzard, an African-American activist credited with helping Bock connect with predominantly minority East Oakland neighborhoods. "She was open and easy. She was not what people considered to be a typical politician. Now she's been caught up with the Sacramento culture. Her whole being has changed. She has stripped herself of the people who were there in the beginning and those who continue to support her...It's unfortunate because now people don't trust her."

To be sure, Bock also has her share of steadfast believers. Olen Grant, an Oakland resident who voted for Bock, said he would do it again in a heartbeat. "I appreciate the reason why she switched to independent," he said. "She's a breath of fresh air. She's not tied to the old machine. She represents an alternative to the voter and is perceived as someone who will make change."

One supporter, in a letter to the *Oakland Tribune,* predicted that Democrats plotting to recapture Bock's seat will face yet another humiliating defeat. "The Democratic Party is no longer seen as the party of the people, but rather a creaky old political machine run by a few cronies who feather their own nests at the expense of the people," Oakland resident Dennis Green wrote in June.

And some Greens continue to support her. "I don't see it as her turning her back on the party," said Michael Feinstein, a Santa Monica City Council member. "I believe she remains committed to Green values and the Green agenda. In order to advance the policies that she was elected to advance, she needs to stay in office."

Bock's plan for staying in office, however, is no slam dunk.

"The fact is she won't be appearing on the ballot as a Green. By doing that, I think she has given away some of the stuff that made her different," said Tim Hodson, executive director of the Center for California Studies at California State University, Sacramento. "Fund-raising may even be tougher now because she is no longer unique."

Risks and rewards

Furthermore, by sitting out the primary, Bock runs the risk of being forgotten by voters attracted by the messages of candidates who do run – candidates they may stick with in the general election.

On the other hand, Bock may be able to attract a wider range of supporters. "She may come across as independent of party structures, party machinery, as opposed to the Green Party label that seems much more ideological," said Democratic political consultant Jeff Raimundo.

Democrats also appear more willing to cut Bock some slack since she is no longer a member of a competing party. One prominent Democratic strategist said Democrats are now very conflicted about going after Bock, since she is no longer seen as much of a threat.

Bock, who is looking for more time to learn and to serve, hopes her gamble will pay off.

"If I don't run a primary campaign, it gives me an advantage in doing the job," she said. "Because I really think that's how people will assess me in November, based on what I had done as a public servant."

Emelyn Rodriguez is senior editor of California Journal. *Comments on this story may be sent to* edit@statenet.com.

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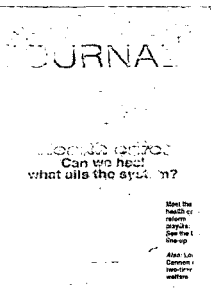

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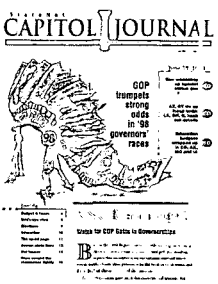

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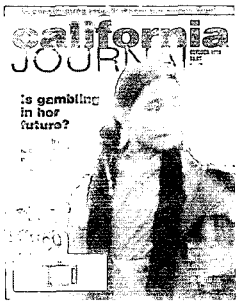

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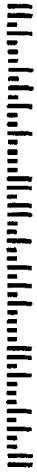

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Gray Davis wets a finger

by Susan Rasky

As the Gray Davis administration approaches the end of its first year in office and gears up for the coming legislative session, the governor and his top political strategists are parsing the results of an internal poll conducted in the final weeks of October.

Entertaining as it will be for the Capitol press corps to figure out what calibrations in style or policy next year are traceable to the poll findings, the more likely prospect is that there won't be much change at all. This became clear, in a sort of roundabout way, during a presentation by Garry South, the governor's chief political adviser, and Paul Maslin, the governor's pollster, at a recent seminar sponsored by the Field Institute.

The underlying revelation that polling occurs in the governor's office was about as startling to the assembled journalists and academics as Captain Renault's discovery that gambling was going on in the backroom at Rick's Cafe in "Casablanca." Indeed, the point South and Maslin set out to make was that contrary to popular belief, the governor puts a wet finger to the wind rather infrequently and only then, as South explained, "to determine how things are described or articulated."

"Message polling" is how it's known in the trade.

Noting that the governor was, well, "cheap," South and Maslin went on to say that Davis eschews focus groups and has commissioned only two other internal polls this year – a benchmark survey in March and a poll in April on Proposition 187.

South confided that the governor "gets very involved" in looking over the polling questions his strategists put forward and that he has "a very instinctive sense of what he wants" to learn from polling. Maslin emphasized that education was still the No. 1 issue for the public and the governor, "an issue that we feel is going to dominate this state and that we have to get back to." The governor, Maslin said, "is nothing if not rock solid in his moderation."

There's no telling how long it might have gone on, this benign but largely self-serving insider spin on the governor's transition from centrist candidate to centrist chief executive, had not veteran *Boston Globe* political reporter and columnist Marty Nolan raised his hand to make a polite inquiry. Nolan began, as he often does when closing in for a journalistic kill, with a disarming bit of history.

In 1961, after taking responsibility for the failed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, President John Kennedy was told by his advisers that his approval rating was skyrocketing, Nolan recalled. He recounted JFK's reply: If the approval ratings were still this high after a few years in office, the administration would not have been doing its job.

So, Nolan now wanted to know from South and Maslin, how might Governor Davis, who entered office with a 20-point victory margin and who currently enjoys highly favorable ratings from the public, respond in a similar circumstance? With one deft stroke, he seemed to prick the balloon of hot air that had been rising over the podium for the previous 30 minutes.

South confided that the governor "gets very involved" in looking over the polling questions his strategists put forward.

The follow-up questions, many from the academics, came thick and fast. Was Davis prepared to spend political capital to push policy in directions where public opinion had not coalesced? Did he poll policy at all? And if not, why not? What had the March benchmark poll revealed about public attitudes on health care reform?

Having come to extol the virtues of a governor with convictions so firm he didn't require more than limited message polling, South and Maslin found themselves defending Davis for paying too little heed to public opinion and not making better use of polling to develop policy.

Results of the newest poll are"strictly internal," Maslin said in a subsequent interview. "We basically were after three kinds of things – the political mood of Californians, a fairly intensive look at Gray Davis' performance and image and finally a look ahead at some thematic policy issues."

As for the health care question, South gamely ventured a candid response. What the polling showed, he said, was that health care reform wasn't the sort of issue you could drive the electorate with. More to the point, it was the sort of issue that could do a governor political harm.

Contributing editor Susan Rasky teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Journalism.The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the California Journal.

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A Solitary Campa

Concerned that the issue of gambling addiction is being given short shrift, former Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy is crisscrossing the nation in a bid to raise awareness about the social costs of expanded gambling, including California's network of tribal casinos.

By Claudia Buck

He's no longer a politician, but Leo McCarthy hasn't lost his passion for public service. How else to explain his almost one-man crusade to cut in on California's escalating dance with gambling?

At 69, McCarthy could remain comfortably ensconced on the 16th floor of his San Francisco office with its sweeping panorama of Treasure Island and sailboats gliding under the Bay Bridge. After six years as Assembly speaker and 12 years as lieutenant governor, McCarthy is officially — and happily — retired from elected office.

But he hasn't retired his conviction for doing what he thinks is right. Or in this case, stepping in to redirect government from a course he regards as wrong.

McCarthy's self-imposed mission is to inject what he believes is some badly needed balance into the gambling discussion, particularly as voters head to the polls next March to once again vote on expanding Indian tribal casinos.

"I'm not worried about the millions who lose 50 or a 100 bucks at gambling and can walk away from the table," said McCarthy recently. "I'm not losing a minute's sleep over those people."

Instead, McCarthy said he's talking about those who've mortgaged their homes, maxxed out their credit cards or squandered their kids' college funds — the kind of addictive behavior that can "economically obliterate" families and lead to child abuse, divorce and even suicide.

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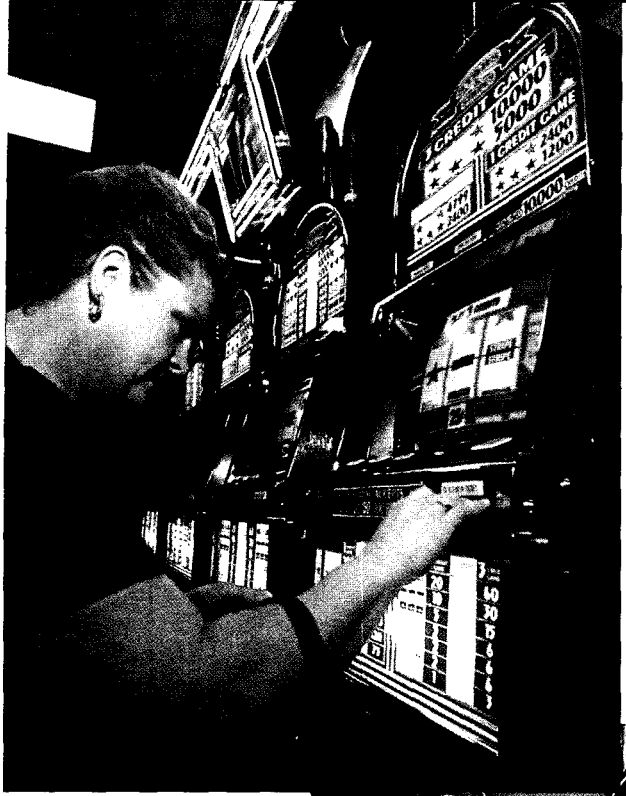

It's compulsive gambling, the so-called "hidden addiction." As one gambling expert put it, "You can't smell a lottery ticket on someone's breath."

But the problem is no less real — and no less destructive — than drug or alcohol addiction. And as the number of legal gambling venues has exploded nationwide in recent years, from tribal casinos to convenience marts peddling state lottery tickets, so has the problem.

From Boston to Sacramento, compulsive gambling experts -- as well as an increasing number of lawmakers — are scrambling to deal with the consequences of the rapid growth of the gambling industry nationwide.

Not a moral crusade

An occasional poker player who typically loses $15 with no qualms, McCarthy is emphatic that his is not a moral crusade. Although he opposed the state Lottery when it was on the ballot in 1984, McCarthy insists he is not out to outlaw gambling. Nor is he motivated by any desire for political gain.

"That's what's nice about my position," said McCarthy, who sits on several corporate boards and runs The Daniel Group, a real estate, investment and international consulting firm named after his father. "I'm motivated by the knowledge that there's an awful downside to the increased volume of legalized gambling and it's being ignored."

McCarthy got a firsthand look at that "downside" the past two years while crisscrossing the country for hearings as a member of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, appointed by Congress to assess the social and economic costs of gambling nationwide. Over 24 months, 140 hours of hearings and testimony from some 80 witnesses, McCarthy heard and saw firsthand the damages inflicted by compulsive gamblers on themselves and their families.

The commission's nine members released their final report this past June. Foremost among its conclusions was the urgent need for more research, specifically 20 proposals to determine the causes, treatment and types of problem gamblers nationwide.

While the root of pathological gambling is not well understood, the report noted, "it is clear that millions of individuals...cannot control their urge to gamble despite often horrific consequences."

Wreaking havoc

Compulsive gamblers wreak havoc on far more than just their immediate families, the report stated. There's also a heavy social and economic cost: embezzlements, bankruptcies, burglaries,increased welfare and unemployment payouts, domestic violence, family neglect and more.

But McCarthy and others believe that message has been buried under a marketing deluge that portrays gambling as harmless recreation and a pain-free cure for cash-strapped governments. Not to mention a Proposition 5 campaign last year that painted the issue as simply a contest between Indian self-reliance and Nevada greed.

"The public debate on gambling has been very misleading," said the former legislator. "It's all about the number of jobs and the amount of revenue that comes from gambling. But there's an awful downside to the spread of legalized gambling that is being ignored."

Too late to get a bill through the Legislature's waning days last September, McCarthy got Bay Area colleague Lou Papan (D-Millbrae) to author an Assembly resolution asking the governor to spend roughly $500,000 for a statewide survey that would pinpoint the number of compulsive, or pathological, gamblers in California.

"We seem to be hellbent on expanding gaming," said Papan, "but we don't have the expertise to determine what gambling has done to families or to the individuals who partake of gambling. We've moved into an arena without the benefit of knowing what we've done to ourselves."

Neither Papan nor McCarthy believes that gambling

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should be abolished. But both believe that gambling operators and the state should bear the responsibility for — and the cost of — coping with gambling's consequences, whether it be in providing addiction treatment programs or public awareness campaigns in schools.

Based on 10 criteria established by the American Psychiatric Association, the telephone survey of 6,500 adults that McCarthy seeks would provide a more accurate count of the number of problem or pathological gamblers in California. It would particularly target women, the elderly and some minority groups considered especially vulnerable.

Awaiting the governor's word

The last time such a survey was conducted was in 1990, long before the state lottery pumped up its advertising budget and well before Indian casinos were in full swing. That survey estimated there were some 500,000 problem and pathological gamblers in California.

McCarthy feels adamantly that voters should have "a full understanding of the downside, as well as any upside, of legal gambling. I think voters will come to understand that the real issue is whether they want California to take a long step toward adopting Nevada's culture. Maybe they do. But let's give them some objective information they can weigh..."

But McCarthy's campaign for a new survey apparently has fallen on deaf ears in the governor's office. After his repeated letters went unanswered, McCarthy drove to Sacramento and stood in line at the governor's reception for Ireland's president in October, shaking Davis' hand and requesting a meeting to discuss the gambling survey. McCarthy got the meeting, a private half-hour with Davis, but no commitment from the governor.

The silence, he said recently, has spoken volumes. And it triggered McCarthy's latest move: He's written one of three ballot arguments against Proposition 1A, the Indian tribal casino measure on next year's March ballot.

The measure is a revised version of last November's record-breaking Proposition 5, which was passed overwhelmingly by voters but later thrown out as unconstitutional by the state Supreme Court.

Also making their cases against the measure will be Assemblyman Bruce Thompson (R-Fallbrook) and a Bay Area woman who is a recovering pathological gambler.

In his ballot argument, McCarthy said the estimated number of problem and pathological gamblers in California is roughly 700,000 but "once all the tribal casinos are operational, I'm very confident that number will double."

But his opposition also is personal. "I don't want California to be another Nevada. I don't want my seven grandchildren growing up in a Nevada culture."

Carrying the crusade

Meanwhile, McCarthy is playing ball not only in California's court, but beyond. He has met with federal officials and members of Congress to urge further gambling research. And he has flown to Washington, D.C., to meet with officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where he hopes to have gambling addiction questions added to the CDC's annual health survey of Americans.

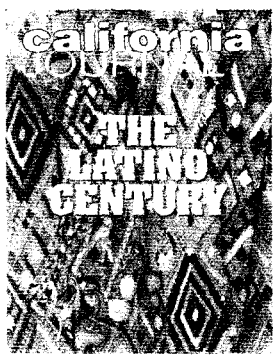
Nor is McCarthy completely alone in sounding the alarm on compulsive gambling. During the last legislative session, 23 states saw bills introduced that dealt with compulsive gambling.

"Governments are in denial that there's a problem with gambling addiction," said Democratic House member Peter Larkin of Massachusetts, who unsuccessfully sought to increase spending for treatment programs in his state this year. "It's hypocritical for states to promote gambling and ignore the consequences."

From an era in the mid-1970s when legalized gambling was as rare as water in the Nevada desert, it has now seeped across nearly every state's borders. Today gamblers can slap down a legal bet in every state but three: Hawaii, Utah and Tennessee. Whether in riverboat casinos, cardrooms, state lotteries or tribal casinos, gambling opportunities are seemingly everywhere.

"The problem has gotten worse because gambling is more accessible," said Edward Looney, executive director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, one of the first states to offer a 24-hour hotline to assist problem

January 2000: The Latino Century



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gamblers.

The explosive growth in the number of gambling establishments across the country recently prompted McCarthy's commission to predict that, at their present rate of growth, gambling venues could become "as common as fast-food outlets."

While there is no firm national estimate of the number of gamblers considered addicted, the NGISC cited several studies that indicate about 5.5 million American adults are afflicted and another 15 million are considered "at risk."

Meanwhile, the amount of money plunked down on legalized betting from coast to coast also has skyrocketed from $17.6 billion in 1976 to $638 billion in 1997, according to *International Gaming and Wagering Business* magazine.

Only lip service

Nevertheless, California thus far has paid only lip service to the idea of treating out-of-control gamblers. When Governor Davis signed gambling agreements with some 55 Indian tribes in September, the compacts included language setting aside funds for compulsive gambling treatment — but there wasn't an exact amount specified and the fate of the compacts is contingent on voter approval in March of Proposition 1A.

Similarly, when the Legislature passed SB 8 by then-Senator Bill Lockyer (D-Hawyard) in 1997, the bill authorized an Office of Compulsive Gambling that would launch a toll-free telephone support line for problem gamblers, offer training for mental health professionals, conduct research into the causes and prevalence of problem gambling and provide treatment for sufferers and their families.

It all sounded promising, except for the last line: "This chapter shall not become operative until funds are appropriated to the Department of Mental Health to carry out this chapter..."

So far that hasn't happened. "It requires someone to step up and request to have (the office) funded," said Nathan Barankin, who was on Lockyer's Senate staff and now serves as his spokesman in the state attorney general's office. Barankin said there was only "tepid enthusiasm" for a compulsive gambling office from former Governor Pete Wilson and mental health department officials, who feared the project would be woefully underfunded, forcing them to "cannibalize" existing budgets.

Some states, such as New Jersey, have already launched gambling treatment programs, hotlines and prevention programs in local high schools. Others have none.

"The only message out there is that gambling is fun and exciting," said Thomas Tucker, executive director of the California Council on Problem Gambling. "But I guarantee that you've got a generation of problem and compulsive gamblers out there."

Claudia Buck is Associate Editor of California Journal. *Comments on this story may be sent to* edit@statenet.com.

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A view of education spending

by Lance T. Izumi

Open up the newspaper and it seems that every education article contains some obligatory comment about how California isn't spending enough on schools. For example, when Governor Gray Davis signed the state budget, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that, "Although the amount spent per pupil will rise by $274 to $6,025, state spending remains far lower than the national average of $7,583 in the 1999-2000 school year."

The state's per-pupil spending figure, however, is misleading.

The official per-pupil spending rate of $6,025 is derived by adding state general fund dollars for K-12 education, plus local property tax contributions, and dividing the total by the average daily number of students attending school in California. The problem is that large chunks of education spending are left out of this calculation.

> How money is spent is much more important than how much is spent.

The federal government's contribution of nearly $4.4 billion to education spending in California isn't counted, even though it accounts for 10 percent of total K-12 revenues. Big ticket items included in this federal contribution: approximately $1 billion in Title I money for poor and disadvantaged students, $513 million for special education and $129 million for class-size reduction.

Also omitted are hundreds of millions of dollars in state and local funds allocated to pay for school capital costs, i.e., debt service on state and local school construction bonds.

Other major education revenues not counted in the official 1999-00 state per-pupil spending figure include $786 million in state Lottery money, $2.6 billion from various local fund sources and $65 million from various state sources.

All these uncounted education revenue sources add up to about $10.7 billion. Add this amount to the $33.6 billion in state general fund revenues and local property taxes and one gets a total of $44.3 billion in total K-12 revenues in California. Divide this total by the state's average daily attendance of just under 5.6 million students and the per-pupil spending figure $7,937. Even if one takes out money spent on adult education, adult vocational education, and child-development preschool programs, one still gets around $7,500 in per pupil spending. That's approximately 25 percent higher than the per-pupil spending figure of $6,025 which is given out by state officials and used by the media.

It should also be noted that the per-pupil spending numbers for many school districts are much higher than the statewide figures. In 1999-00, Oakland will spend $7,933 per student, while Fresno will spend $7,994. San Jose will spend $8,372 per student, Los Angeles will spend $9,028, and San Francisco will spend $10,021. Most amazing, though, is the Sausalito Elementary School District in Marin County, which will spend a whopping $16,555 per student.

Yet, there is little correlation between these high spending figures and student achievement. For example, in Sausalito, where per-pupil spending is thousands of dollars higher than the highest per-pupil-spending state, large majorities of students in nearly all grades scored below the 50th percentile on the state-administered SAT-9 test.

This lack of correlation is unsurprising. In international comparisons, U.S. schools rank near the top in spending but near the bottom in achievement progress. Also, after examining decades of academic research, University of Rochester Professor Eric Hanushek, one of the nation's leading education economists, found that, "there is little systematic relationship between school resources and student performance." The point, says Hanushek, is that "how money is spent is much more important than how much is spent."

There are several lessons here. First, the public should be wary of education officials' claims of poverty based on the commonly used official calculation of per-pupil spending. The real figure is much higher. Second, and more important, no matter how much is spent on education, unless those funds are channeled into programs that work (e.g., teacher training emphasizing subject-matter competence, implementation of the state's rigorous academic content standards, and introducing competition into the system through school choice), don't expect any change or improvement in California public education.

Contributing editor Lance T. Izumi is a senior fellow at the Pacific Research Institute in San Francisco. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the California Journal.

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letters

30 at 30

Please accept my heartiest congratulations on the occasion of *California Journal's* 30th anniversary and the publication of your tremendous November 1999 Collector's Edition. In 68 finely crafted pages, you and your colleagues took your dedicated readers on a panoramic journey through California political history. May God continue to richly bless your service to the people of California and their elected representatives in the century ahead.

The Rev. Bernard Guekguezian
First Armenian Presbyterian Church
Fresno

Congratulations on an outstanding anniversary issue. For 30 years I have enjoyed your even-handed analyses of California politics and issues.

A minor point — as experts on most things California, your copy editors should know that the correct way to refer to the Sierra Nevada Mountains is "Sierra," not "Sierras." *(John Muir, November 1999)* The Sierra Nevada Mountains are part of a mountain range, a singular entity. On the other hand, it's OK to refer to the mountain range that includes Mount Lassen and Mount Shasta as the "Cascades," because each mountain is an individual volcano, i.e., a collection of mountains.

Keep up the good work.

Marge Best
Chico

I note that you and the *California Journal* have joined in the media's widespread misinformation regarding the true dates of the 20th century. Webster's defines centuries as starting with years ending in "01" and ending in years ending with "00." This is logical if all centuries have had the requisite 100 years, starting with the first century, year 1 to year 100. Thus, the 20th century does not end until December 31, 2000. Why so much of the media have seen fit to misapply this simple fact is beyond belief. The reasons for it escape me.

Should some really key California mover surface in the next 14 months, *California Journal* could look somewhat silly.

James L. Martin
Fresno

One correction on what otherwise is an excellent article on Pat Brown by George Skelton *(Pat Brown, November 1999)*:

It wasn't Adlai Stevenson to whom Pat didn't "deliver" the California delegation to the Democratic National Convention in 1960. Instead, he tried but couldn't deliver the delegation to John Kennedy. Indeed, he had agreed to support Kennedy early on that year in return for which Kennedy didn't enter California's Democratic presidential primary.

But given the late Stevenson effort, Adlai being very popular on the delegation, there weren't the votes that Brown expected.

I was a delegate and early Kennedy volunteer-supporter in that long-ago year. Congratulations on an excellent edition and on your 30th year from this charter subscriber.

Joe Houghteling
San Francisco

The story of tribal gaming

The article by Ioana Patringenaru *("Tribal clout", October 1999)* related to Indian gaming and Proposition 5 was most needed to inform people like myself as to what is happening.

Rick Higginbotham
Los Angeles

Ioana Patringenaru wrote a nice piece on casinos and native tribes in California, but she doesn't know the way across the desert. You just can't get from Riverside to the Arizona border on Route 10 (San Berdoo, yes; Riverside, no) and you won't see a saguaro cactus until you get way into Arizona. We just don't have them this side of the border (unless Gene Autry or somebody took the time to plant one).

Jim Conn
Riverside

Child care dilemmas

As a mother and associate engineer who has to juggle child care and work, I couldn't agree more with Kate Karpilow's commentary.*("Time for a child care master plan," October 1999)*

Here's one area that's easy to change: The policy for state employees requires pregnant women to use up all of their sick leave and vacation credits before they are eligible to use compensation for maternity leave. This is highly unfair — especially considering that after returning to work, a new mother has no leave credits available for doctor appointments, caring for a sick child or other unforeseen events that occur as a normal part of family life.

Another effect of this policy is that men in the same positions and same offices who rely on their spouses to care for their children often have accumulated large sick leave and vacation balances. This is not their fault, but this state policy severely punishes women who chose to have families and depend on the disability leave to financially stay afloat during maternity leave.

Marilu Habel
Sacramento

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Lance Izumi's perspective

I have been reading the *California Journal* for many years with great admiration. The last three months or so I have read an opinion piece by Lance Izumi of Pacific Research Institute, an organization that I personally disagree with. Ideologically, it is a right-wing organization. As a teacher I have felt personally angered by his flagrant anti-public education positions.

However, I understand that a bipartisan magazine can maintain its neutral position by offering two diametrically opposed positions. So I have searched your magazine for the polar opposite of Mr. Izumi's positions, but have been unable to find it. All of the other opinion pieces are by mainstream journalists who have nonpartisan viewpoints.

If you are instigating a point-counterpoint type argument among contributing editors, it doesn't work unless you have a counterpoint. I have yet to see a counterpoint to the Pacific Research Institute in your publication and this troubles me greatly.

Paul Markowitz
West Hills

Regarding "School bonds and the two-thirds vote" *(October 1999)*, Lance Izumi ought to support the "Let's Fix Our Schools" statewide initiative on the March 2000 ballot if he demands true accountability for local school bonds.

Our organization was able to give the initiative its full, unqualified support because it includes unprecedented accountability measures to ensure every dollar raised goes directly toward improving school facilities and investing in our kids' education.

This is no blank check. It's still up to the voters to decide the merits of every school bond. Under the measure, school districts must spell out exactly what projects will be funded with local bond money. Then, if voters approve a local bond request, not just one but two independent yearly audits will be conducted to make sure no funds are diverted for salaries or other operating expenses and that every voter-approved project is done on time and on budget.

Californians agree on the importance of investing in our kids' education. With these strict accountability measures included in the "Let's Fix Our Schools" initiative, we can be sure that our investment will bring the results we all desire — better schools and a brighter future for all our kids.

Burt McChesney
Proposition 26 co-chair
Sacramento

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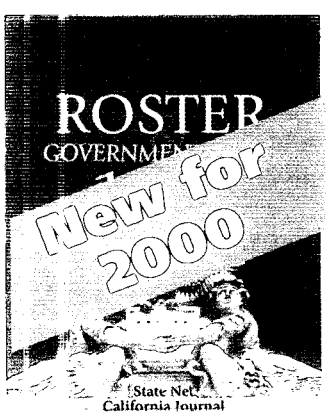

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Tougher road for women candidates

by Dana Wilkie

It was an offhand comment, a remark by a man who writes for one of the country's more noteworthy publications. Elizabeth Dole, this man said during a casual airport conversation, had not yet articulated a reason why she wanted to be president.

It was the first time I'd heard that about Dole. I would hear it a lot more in coming months. And I would hear it frequently in the weeks leading up to Dole's decision to abandon her historic campaign for the White House.

At the time of that airport conversation, Dole was doing respectably in polls. In a few weeks, she would make a strong third-place showing in the Iowa straw poll. It seemed to me Dole had articulated as many reasons for her candidacy as had George W. Bush, the only difference being that his reasons got more press.

But I had a sense of *deja vu* — of having listened to other reporters, writing for other publications, talking in the same way about other women aiming for high office.

It happened in 1994, when former state Treasurer Kathleen Brown was doing well in early polls for the California governor's race. It happened last year, when Rep. Jane Harman looked like a strong prospect for the same seat. The complaint first surfaced in reporters' conversations, typically led by men with some journalistic standing: Neither woman, it seemed, could "articulate a reason" why she wanted to be governor. The complaints took on a life of their own, circulating among reporters and soon showing up in news stories, though with precious little backing. It seemed the sentiment acquired veracity by sheer repetition.

The language journalists choose to describe candidates has a powerful effect on how voters see those candidates. Saying that a woman cannot articulate why she wants a job — a complaint that leaves the impression she is indecisive, coy or simply can't think straight — is just one way journalists can unwittingly stack the cards against a woman's candidacy.

There are also the pet labels journalists use for women. She is bubbly, for instance. Or perky. Or chipper. Bubbly? Makes one think of something light and frivolous, like champagne. Perky? Wide-eyed starlets and Mary Tyler Moore. Chipper? Small birds and hyperactive squirrels.

Try to recall the last time a journalist described a male candidate as "chipper." You won't. Men are "energetic," a word that connotes power. Women are "chipper," a word that connotes triviality.

What about "grandmotherly"? Women between 45 and 65 are well positioned to hold political office: Typically, their children are grown, their careers are established, and they are psychologically and financially secure. Yet the word "grandmotherly," which could legitimately describe any woman over 40, connotes either domesticity, as in aprons and baked goods, or old age, as in feebleness of mind and body.

But reporters' biases are typically more subtle. A recent study by the Women's Leadership Fund found that reporters more often quote men candidates than women candidates when they discuss issues, and more often highlight a man's positions on issues. Male reporters are also more likely to mention a woman candidate's age, marital status, number of children, looks and personality — all of which focus attention on a woman's appearance and family life, not her political substance.

One political correspondent referred to Dole in conversation as "Lizzy Baby."

Had you hung around Dole's campaign, you would have witnessed subtle, and not-so-subtle, differences between the way journalists treated Dole and the way they treated her GOP counterparts, all men. One political correspondent for a prominent newspaper referred to Dole in conversation as "Lizzy Baby," revealing a perspective that no doubt at times crept into his copy.

More than once, men who've covered Washington for decades scoffed at Dole's speeches as "simplistic." Dole was also asked more often than her male competitors about her vice-presidential prospects, says Andrea Mitchell, chief foreign affairs correspondent for NBC News.

"Women are seen as a ticket-balancing element," says Mitchell, who recently sat on a panel that examined the new study. Dole typically had policy plans as specific as any proposed by Bush, who was in fact criticized for being slow to present his policies. Reporters were content to write, however, that Bush was simply avoiding specifics. Few accused him of failing to articulate a reason for being president.

Why does George W. Bush want to be president? Because he's ambitious, that's why, and because he wants to follow in Daddy's footsteps.

Oddly, that seems good enough reason for most reporters.

Contributing editor Dana Wilkie is a Washington correspondent for the San Diego Union-Tribune. *The views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the* California Journal.

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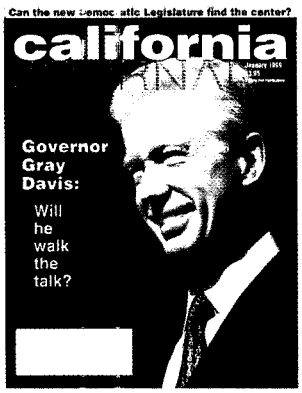

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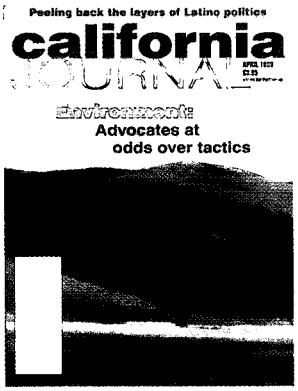

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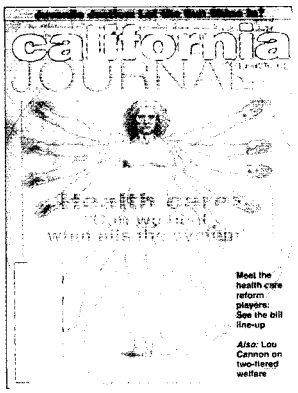

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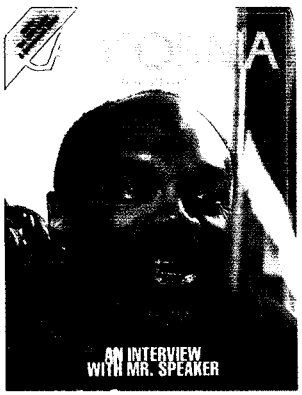

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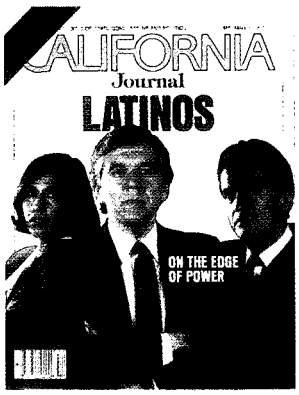

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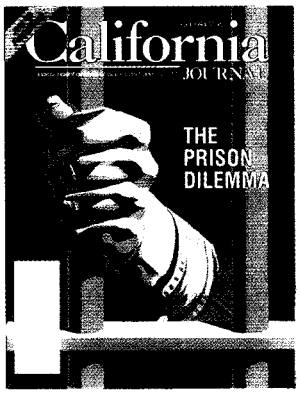

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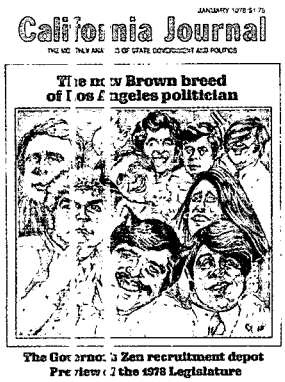

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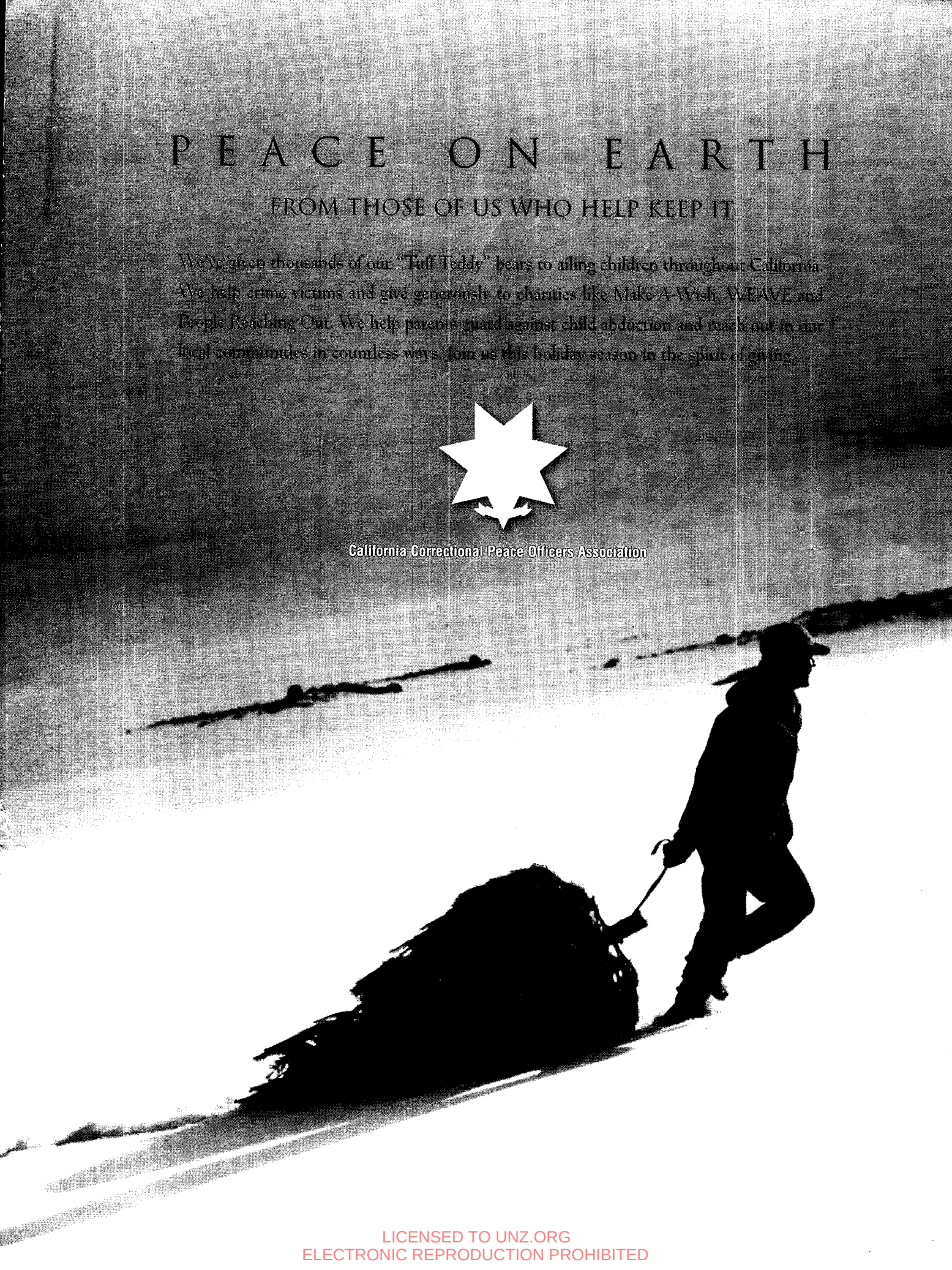
PEACE ON EARTH
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